

3d artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine
Issue 039 March 2009

James Paick

He's the man behind Scribble Pad Studios and has produced work for the likes of Electronic Arts, Pandemic Studios & Wizards of the Coast (to name a few). Read our interview with **James Paick** and prepare your eyes to feast upon some outstanding artwork!

Interviews

Chris Thunig & James Paick



Articles

The Sketchbook of Roberto F. Castro



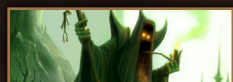
Galleries

Eduardo Peña, Robin Olausson & Ioan Dumitrescu, plus more!



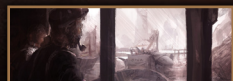
Tutorials

Speed Painting by Jesse van Dijk & Levente Peterffy, plus more!



Making Of's

'Mr. Reaper' by Jose Alves da Silva, plus more!





Editorial

Welcome to **Issue 39!** We've been discussing today about how to bring you even *more* content in addition to what's currently being scheduled, so the future is looking bright for 2DArtist and 3DCreative – it's never a bad time to jump on the ol' subscription wagon and get yourselves set up to receive your issues automatically each month!

Winks

So what do we have for you?

Well, first of all, I'm both proud

and honoured to be able to introduce an interview with the super talented and inspirational, **James Paick (p.17)**. I've had the pleasure of speaking to James over the past year or so, and have seen his portfolio rack up the most awesome artworks on a monthly basis – this is a portfolio that has regular updates of the most inspiring kind, and you will never fail to take something away with you after a visit to his gallery! And not only is James a master of his trade, he also dedicates time to helping and teaching others. What a great guy? So we were jumping for all it was worth when we got news that James was happy to be interviewed by the 2DArtist team, and we're pleased to see the final article out this month. We hope you'll enjoy learning all about the artist behind the artwork as much as we have! Our second interview is with matte painting expert, **Chris Thunig (p.7)**. Chris was first featured in 2DArtist back in 2006 (Issue #02) when he created a tutorial for our Elements series on painting trees, so we are absolutely thrilled to have him back with us this month for an interview feature so we can all check out the stunning portfolio that he has accumulated over the last 3 years, during which time he has worked his way from concept artist to matte painter. Hope you enjoy!

Now, we have one of the strongest sketchbook articles 2DArtist has seen to date – a real feast for the eyes! **Roberto F. Castro** has kindly given us an insight into the pages of his sketchbook (**p.29**), ranging from architectural concept sketches, to character designs and futuristic vehicles – a serious kick up the bum for those of us out there who know we can draw but find excuses not to. So get your sketchbooks and pencils at the ready, as you're going to want to draw yourself silly once you've got through this stunning article!

Our tutorials this month feature **Dwayne Vance** with part 2 of our vehicle rendering tutorial (**p.65**), in which he's refining his futuristic car concept in Painter – next month **Hoi Mun Tham** will be back with us to show us his refinement progress of his excavation digger-type vehicle, so stick around! Our speed paintings have evolved around the topic of, "They looked through the window and what they saw took their breath away", for which **Jesse van Dijk** and **Levente Peterffy** have created another 2 fantastic paintings for our ever random one-life briefs – with very different results (just how we like it!). Check out **p.71!** Chee Ming Wong is also back with us in chapter 9 of his in-depth space painting tutorial series, in which this month we're painting sci-fi hangars. Another wonderfully written and insightful tutorial by Chee, our space painting master (**p.83!**)

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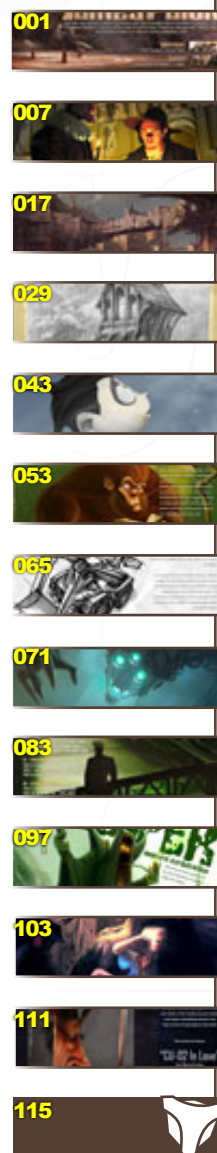
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CU-02 In Love

Digital Art Masters: V3 Free Chapter Promotion

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Finally, be sure to check out our 2 wonderful Making Of articles by **Jose Alves da Silva**, who takes us through the creation of his recent image, **Mr. Reaper (p.97)**, and **Sean Hong** who talks of childhood dreams in an overview about his image, **Who Is That... (p.103)**. Enjoy this month's issue, and we'll see you back here for more next month! **Ed.**



Setting up your PDF reader

For optimum viewing of the magazine, it is recommended that you have the latest Acrobat Reader installed.

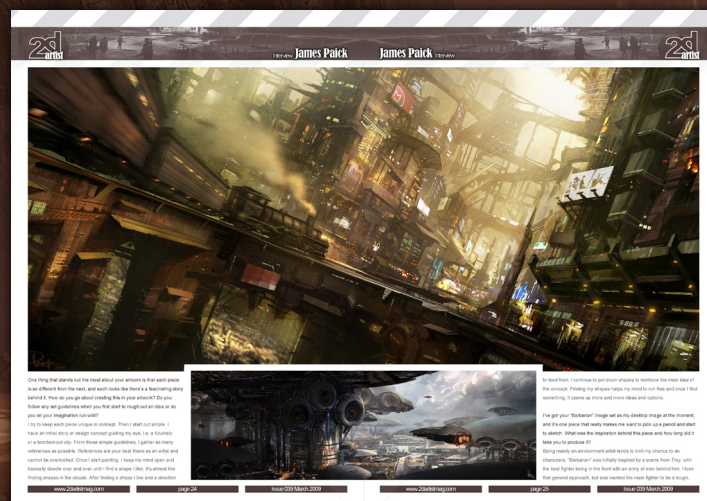
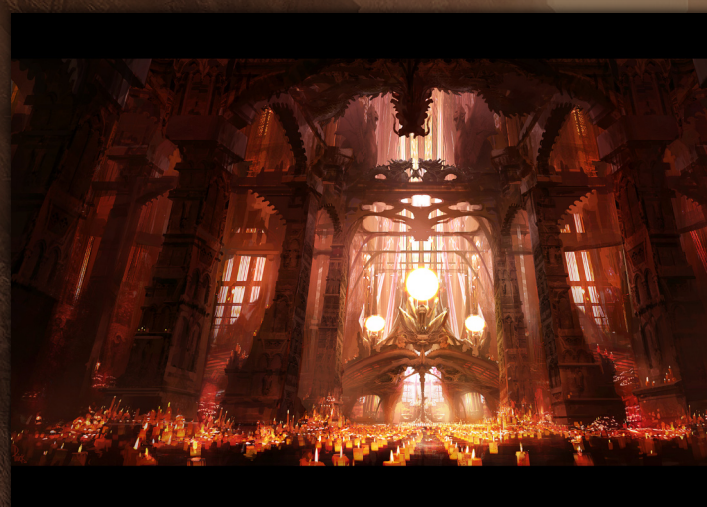
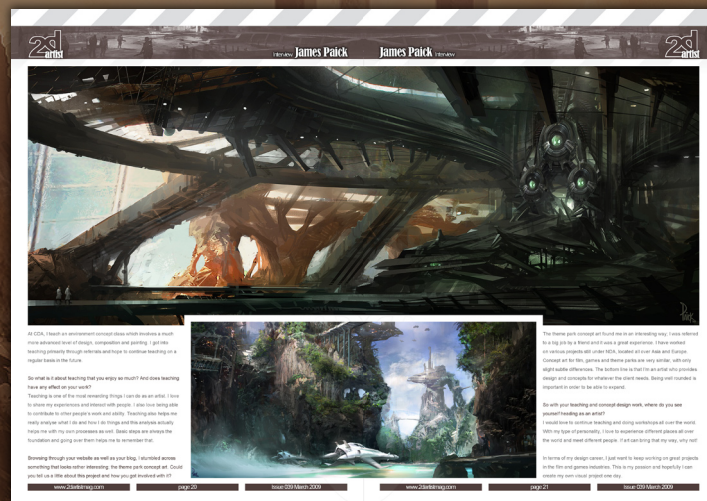
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Get the most out of your Magazine!

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Contributing Artists

Every month, many artists around the world contribute to 3DCreative & 2DArtist magazines. Here you can find out all about them. If you would like to be a part of 3DCreative or 2DArtist Magazines, please contact:
lynette@3dtotal.com



James Paick

A conceptual artist and design consultant working in video games and feature films, working out of Los Angeles, California, USA.



<http://www.jamespaick.com>
<http://www.scribblejames.blogspot.com>



Roberto Fernández Castro

An architect and visual artist. He has won awards in architecture and design and is the author of several

architectural projects that have been followed through to completion and built. As a visual artist he uses traditional and digital techniques, and he develops works incorporating digital painting, concept art and animation. A great part of his work is focused on architectural environments, futuristic design and character/creature design.
<http://www.robertofc.com> | contact@robertofc.com

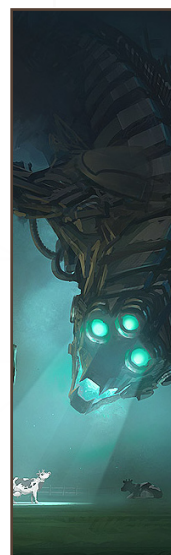


Jesse van Dijk

Concept Artist and Production Designer from Amsterdam, the Netherlands, with over four years of industry experience.

Immediately after receiving his Masters degree in industrial design at the Delft University of Technology, he went to work in the games industry. He is currently a senior concept artist at W! Games, Amsterdam, and does freelance work as well.

<http://www.jessevandijk.net/>
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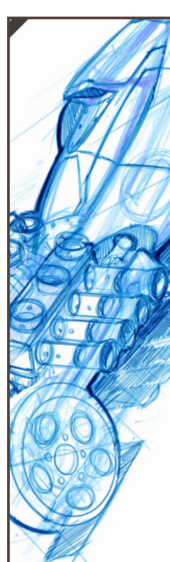


Chee Ming Wong

Has over 8 years of creative visualisation and pre-production experience, having worked on various independent game

projects, publications and CGI pre-production artwork. He is currently the CEO of his own digital art studio, Opus Artz, based in London. Previous work includes his role as Senior Concept Artist and Visual Lead for *Infinity: The Quest for Earth* MMO 2009, plus numerous commercial publications.

<http://www.opusartz.com>
chee@opusartz.com



Dwayne Vance

Has worked professionally as a designer for companies such as Mattel on *Hot Wheels* and has also designed protective gear for Troy Lee Designs. Now he has his own company called FutureElements and creates work for the motorsports, entertainment and auto industries. He also has his own line of hot rod art which is influenced by his concept design background.

<http://www.futureelements.net>
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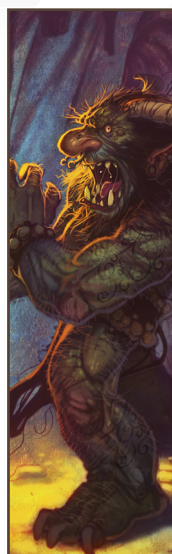
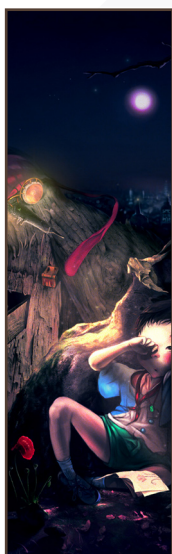


Sean Hong

A freelance animator and illustrator. Children, nature and ordinary citizens in life are his favourite source of

inspiration. He hopes his work will stay close to daily life, catching the fantasy from the everyday. He's been learning to paint digitally for three years now, and has been excited by the unbelievable effects and possibilities that digital art can bring to image creation.

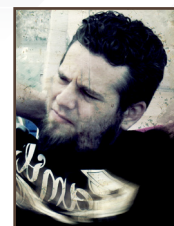
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Patri Balanovsky

Production & Concept Artist from Tel-Aviv, Israel. He's been drawing & painting since he can remember; creating characters, creatures and fantastic scenes has always been a passion of his. Telling a whole story through a single image can be quite a challenge, but he's always up for it! Keeping his work fresh and versatile, he explores all sorts of genres, styles and attitudes.

<http://chuckmate.blogspot.com>
pat2005b@hotmail.com



Jose Alves da Silva

Has been working in the 3D field since 1992, focusing primarily on architectural visualisation. He founded a

company, Pura Imagem (<http://www.puraimagem.pt>), which is dedicated to architectural visualisation and has been successful over the last 12 years. Another passion of his is painting, which allows him to be creative outside of the 3D world. He believes that continuous learning and improvement is the key to personal evolution, and to survive in today's industry.

joalvessilva@netcabo.pt



Rolando Mallada

A passionate artist that loves comic book and illustration work. Four years ago he started working professionally in the comic industry in the USA. At present, he enjoys giving birth to gorillas, zombie teddy bears and other creatures for APE Comics. His headquarters are in Montevideo, Uruguay. There he passes the afternoons working at his wife's company, with his pet dog and a hot cup of coffee.

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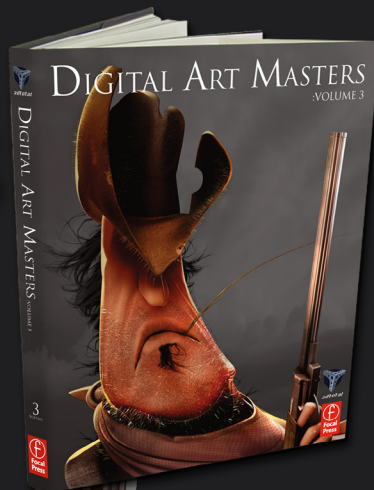


Image by Chris Thunig

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"Working with 3D applications also adds the benefit of being able to rely on accurate lighting and depth passes that can be worked into the painting"

CHRIS THUNIG

Chris Thunig worked his way into matte painting from concept art and storyboarding. Now a matte painting expert, we find out the details of just what this can involve with the combination of 3D and moving cameras to obtain those perfect shots.

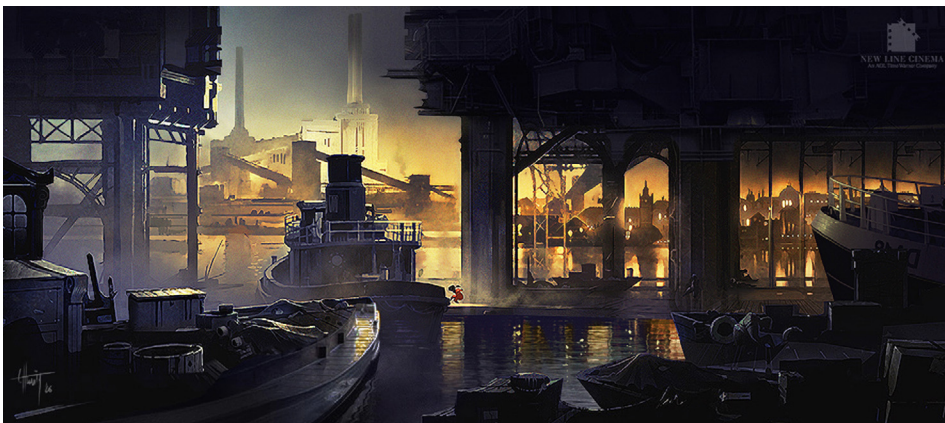




CHRIS THUNIG

Hi Chris, it seems like you have been on a little CG adventure around Europe for the last 10 years. Can you sum it all up for us?

Hi Tom! I started out working traditionally as a storyboard and concept artist in a small animation studio at Babelsberg Film Studios in Germany, where I worked on a number of 3D animated music videos. It was a great way to broaden my horizons past pen and paper, as I was able to dive into the CG realm and utilise otherwise unaffordable technology.



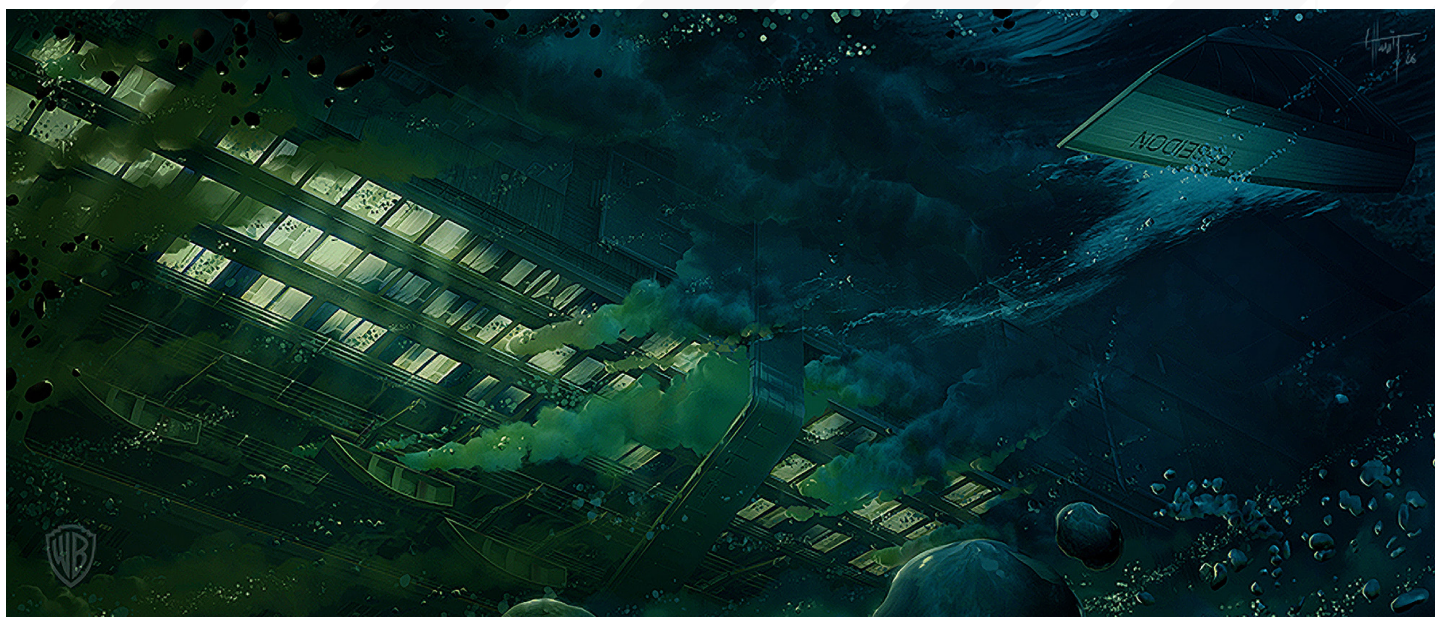
After two years in Berlin, and with the end of the New Media hype in sight, I realised it was time to move on. Duran, a VFX studio based in Paris, was hiring for an animated feature and hired me as a texture artist with an option to go into matte painting as the production progressed. After the

movie had wrapped I was able to land a job at MPC in London, based on the work I had done in Paris. There I worked on a number of US and UK productions until Blizzard Entertainment's Cinematic team gave me a call in 2006.





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Indeed it is a little European adventure you have been having! Was there anything in particular that made Blizzard find you? And how did it feel to be head hunted by such a famous studio? Nothing in particular. I believe Matte Painting Supervisor Jonathan Berube came across my website and passed it on to the recruiters. I had gotten in touch with a number of studios through this web presence before, but I was surprised how quickly Blizzard moved ahead. After I'd talked to them on the phone and they'd invited me over for a visit, things came together surprisingly quickly and in a rather organised fashion. Where a lot of other companies had been rather wishy-washy about the details, such

as immigration matters and housing, these guys just had it down to a "T". They were certainly serious and that made me feel very taken care of. That's a good feeling, especially when you are about to leave friends and family behind to move to another continent.

What was the first ever professional matte painting you did and how did it turn out?

The first one ever was for Enki Bilal's *Immortel (ad vitam)* a movie that, for the most part, is set in a dark version of futuristic New York City. It was a rather straightforward shot with a locked-off camera looking down a street (first matte on my website). I worked over a 3D layout that the

modelling team provided and things went fairly smoothly, as all I had to deliver was the finished image file. No extra passes or frames were required.

I notice some of your recent mattes are "painted over 3D geometry provided by Duran". Can you tell us a bit more about this technique? And what are the pros and cons?

For most of the CG shots in *Immortel*, the modelling team had done some kind of 3D model which they would use for lay-outting. They would hand me a greyscaled render of their scene and I would paint and texture over it. The layouts had all been previously signed off by the





director, which diminished a lot of guesswork for me when it came to composition, design etc. All the shots I worked on in this production were locked-off, so I could treat them very much like canvas paintings without worrying too much about the technical restrictions a parallaxing 2.5D shot would have brought with it.

Do your methods and techniques differ at all when painting over a greyskaded render, as opposed to painting a scene from a blank canvas? Would you recommend other 2D artists play with 3D to form a basis for their scenes in this way?

It differs in that it eliminates a lot of the guesswork. Usually when I have geometry as a basis for a matte painting it is something coming straight from the layout department, which means composition and camera have already been signed off. And even when I layout and model objects myself, constructing the perspective is no longer an issue. Working with 3D applications also adds the benefit of being able to rely on accurate lighting and depth passes that can be worked into the painting.

I also noticed that several images you created for *The Da Vinci Code* have the detail "3D geometry and projection-rendered in shot to create parallax". Can you also tell us a bit about this technique?

The footage of shots with a moving camera was tracked and matched with a 3D camera, which allowed me to place geometry in 3D space that



corresponded exactly to the footage. This way it was possible to use a matte painting in a shot with a moving camera by projecting the matte painting onto the geometry and film it (render it) through the match moved 3D camera.

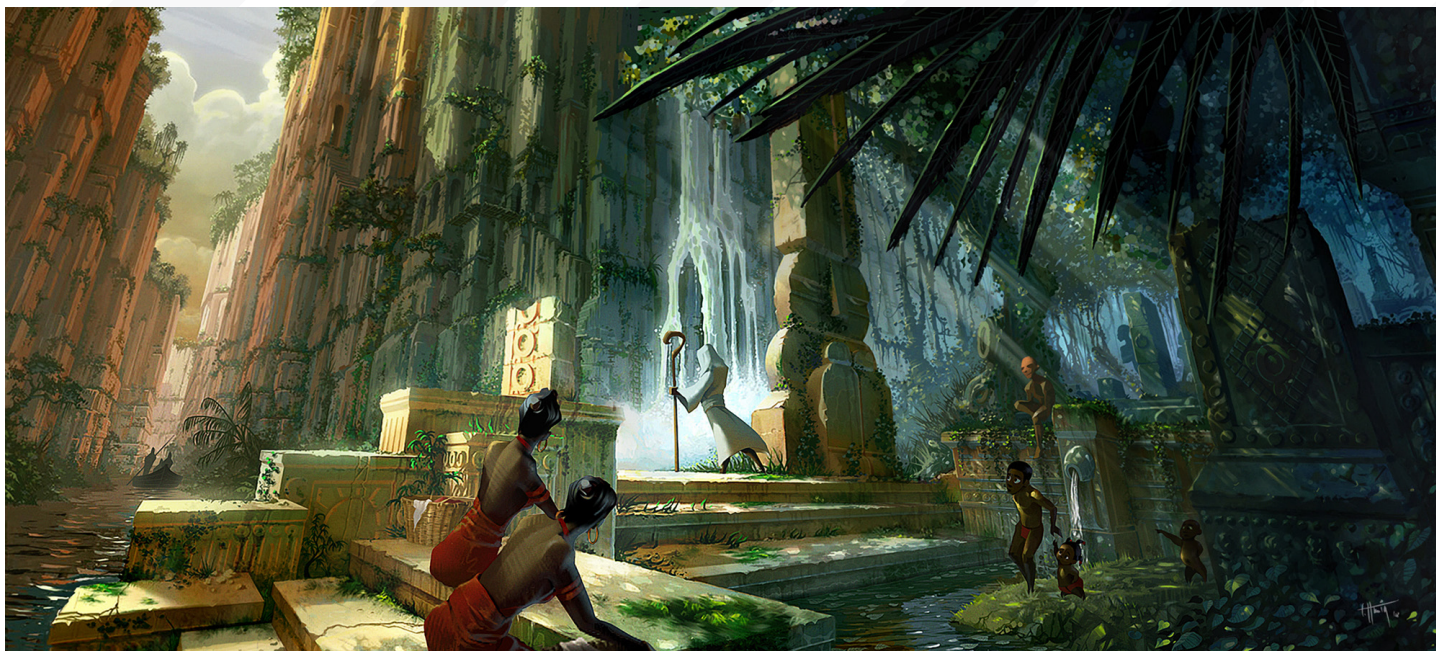
It's great that mattes can be used in moving shots like this, but I imagine that the camera's path is still very restricted, is that correct? In a projection-based matte painting, only the geometry facing the camera is painted up. When viewed from any other angle, stretching or ghosting will be visible. When the shot camera

Time Warner

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reaches an angle that would reveal these shortcomings, placing more projection cameras at these angles makes it possible to overpaint the problem zones.

What has been your favourite project to work on and why?

I'm lucky to have worked on a number of different projects. Though each one had its challenges, the fun part for me was working as part of a talented team for people whose work I had admired for years. If you asked me what projects I had more fun working on than

others it would be those that had their finances and production management all worked out. Interestingly this isn't always a given, especially in European productions.

Yeah, we've heard loads of times how the management makes or breaks a project. What is your experience with the management expecting artists to work extra hours? Has it varied a lot with the different studios you have worked at or does everyone expect extra these days?

The larger studios I worked at had their bidding figured out, their deadlines set accordingly and

their policies in place when it came to overtime. In any case, crunching mainly happens towards the end of a project and overtime is usually compensated for in one way or another. While employees are generally expected to do what it takes to get the project done, and help out after normal work hours if needs be, they are rarely expected to do this for free.

I notice some beautiful concepts for your personal project "Lux Lucis". Can you tell us some more about this one and what future plans you have for this and any other personal work?

Really "Lux Lucis" is just a drawer full of loose ideas that I hope will eventually progress into something more substantial. With my usual workload and the time left between job and family, Lord knows when that will be!

Well, we look forward to seeing this and more paintings from you, Chris. Many thanks for chatting with us.

Chris Thunig

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.thunig.com/>

Or contact them at:

vividetail@yahoo.com

Interviewed by: Tom Greenway



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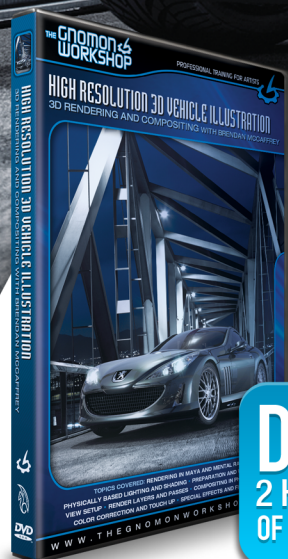
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“Teaching is one of the most rewarding things I can do as an artist. I love to share my experiences and interact with people. I also love being able to contribute to other people’s work and ability”

Liking nothing more than to help and teach others about environmental concept design, James Paick is one of the most inspirational artists around today. We recently got the chance to find out more about the man behind the amazing artwork.

**James
Paick**

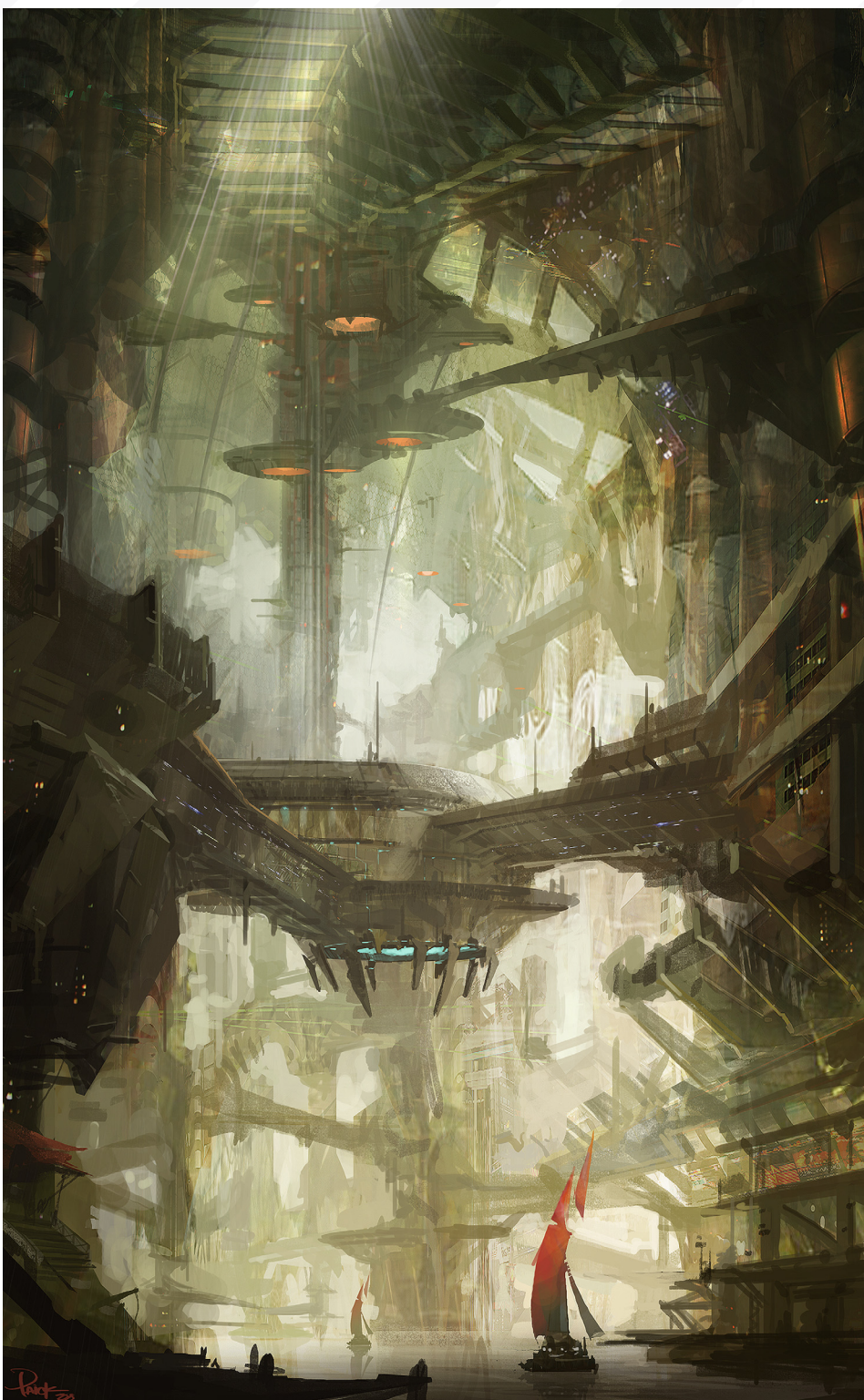
James Paick

Hi James, it's a pleasure to chat with you and I will try and make this as painless as possible! Right let's kick-start things off. What sparked your interest in art? Can you recall what the first image you drew was?

I always drew as a kid. It was a hobby that I picked up early, because my mother was a traditional artist by hobby too. I remember being a small infant playing with toys while she painted in the garage. One of my first memories of drawing myself was in Kindergarten. I drew a picture of a submarine and then went outside to play. While I was outside, the teacher saw my drawing and called my parents in for a conference. She told them that I had a gift for drawing and that they should nourish that gift.

I assume your parents did nourish your gift, or else you wouldn't be here! But when did you get heavily into art and at what point did you decide, "Hey I want to do this for a career"?

My parents did encourage me to learn art at a

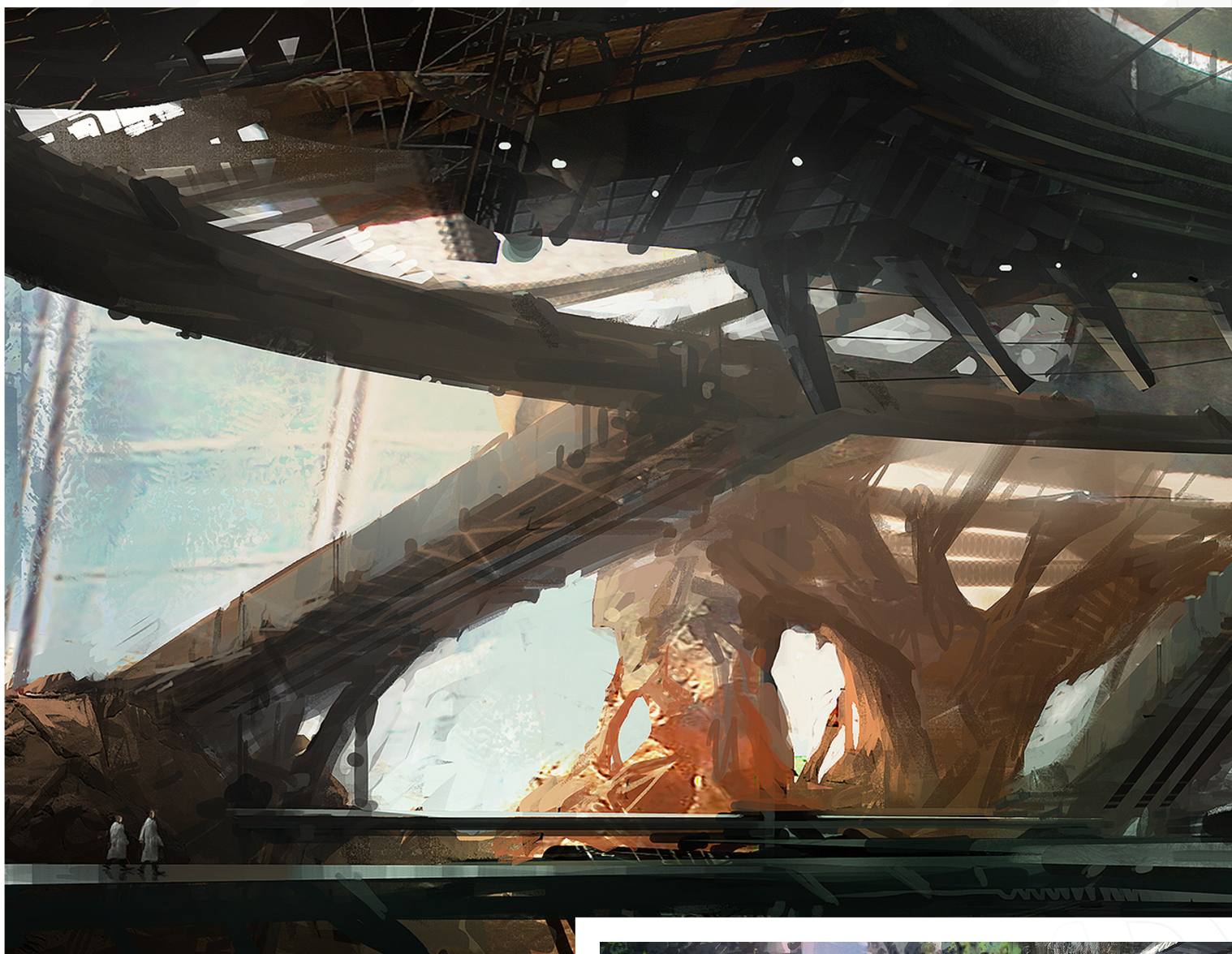


young age, however they also really wanted me to pursue a more traditional route in terms of my future. They both really wanted me to attend a university and study business or engineering. Luckily for me, my lack of academic success let me concentrate mostly on building up my art portfolio. I think I'm living proof that academic studying is not for everyone!

You're currently teaching at the Gnomon School of Digital Arts as well as the Concept Design Academy. Could you tell us how you got into this? What sort of things do you teach?

Teaching is something I've always been interested in. At Gnomon, I taught a very basic class on production design, which covered design language, concept process and drawing.





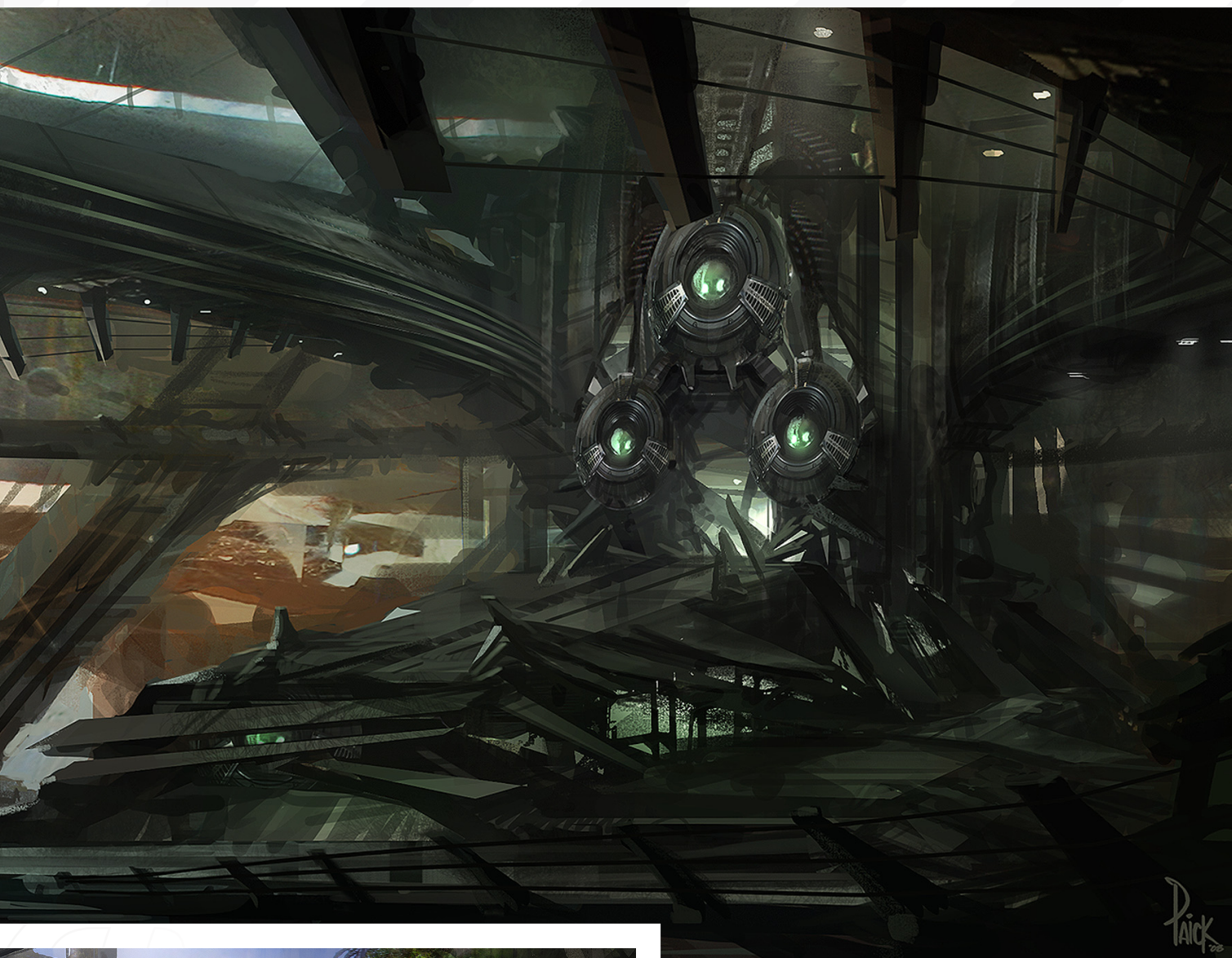
At CDA, I teach an environment concept class which involves a much more advanced level of design, composition and painting. I got into teaching primarily through referrals and hope to continue teaching on a regular basis in the future.

So what is it about teaching that you enjoy so much? And does teaching have any effect on your work?

Teaching is one of the most rewarding things I can do as an artist. I love to share my experiences and interact with people. I also love being able to contribute to other people's work and ability. Teaching also helps me really analyse what I do and how I do things and this analysis actually helps me with my own processes as well. Basic steps are always the foundation and going over them helps me to remember that.

Browsing through your website as well as your blog, I stumbled across something that looks rather interesting; the theme park concept art. Could you tell us a little about this project and how you got involved with it?





The theme park concept art found me in an interesting way; I was referred to a big job by a friend and it was a great experience. I have worked on various projects still under NDA, located all over Asia and Europe. Concept art for film, games and theme parks are very similar, with only slight subtle differences. The bottom line is that I'm an artist who provides design and concepts for whatever the client needs. Being well rounded is important in order to be able to expand.

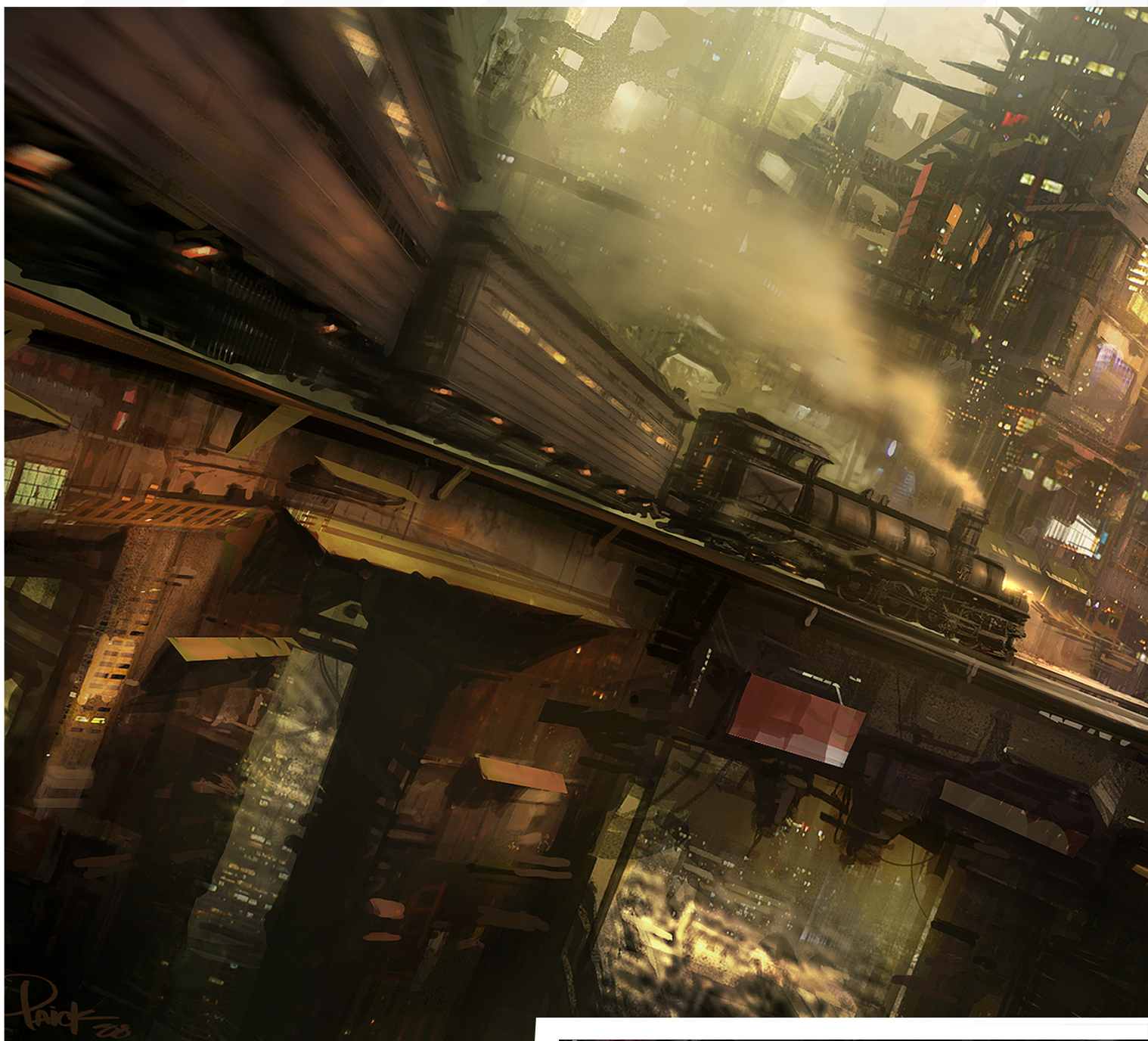
So with your teaching and concept design work, where do you see yourself heading as an artist?

I would love to continue teaching and doing workshops all over the world. With my type of personality, I love to experience different places all over the world and meet different people. If art can bring that my way, why not!

In terms of my design career, I just want to keep working on great projects in the film and games industries. This is my passion and hopefully I can create my own visual project one day.



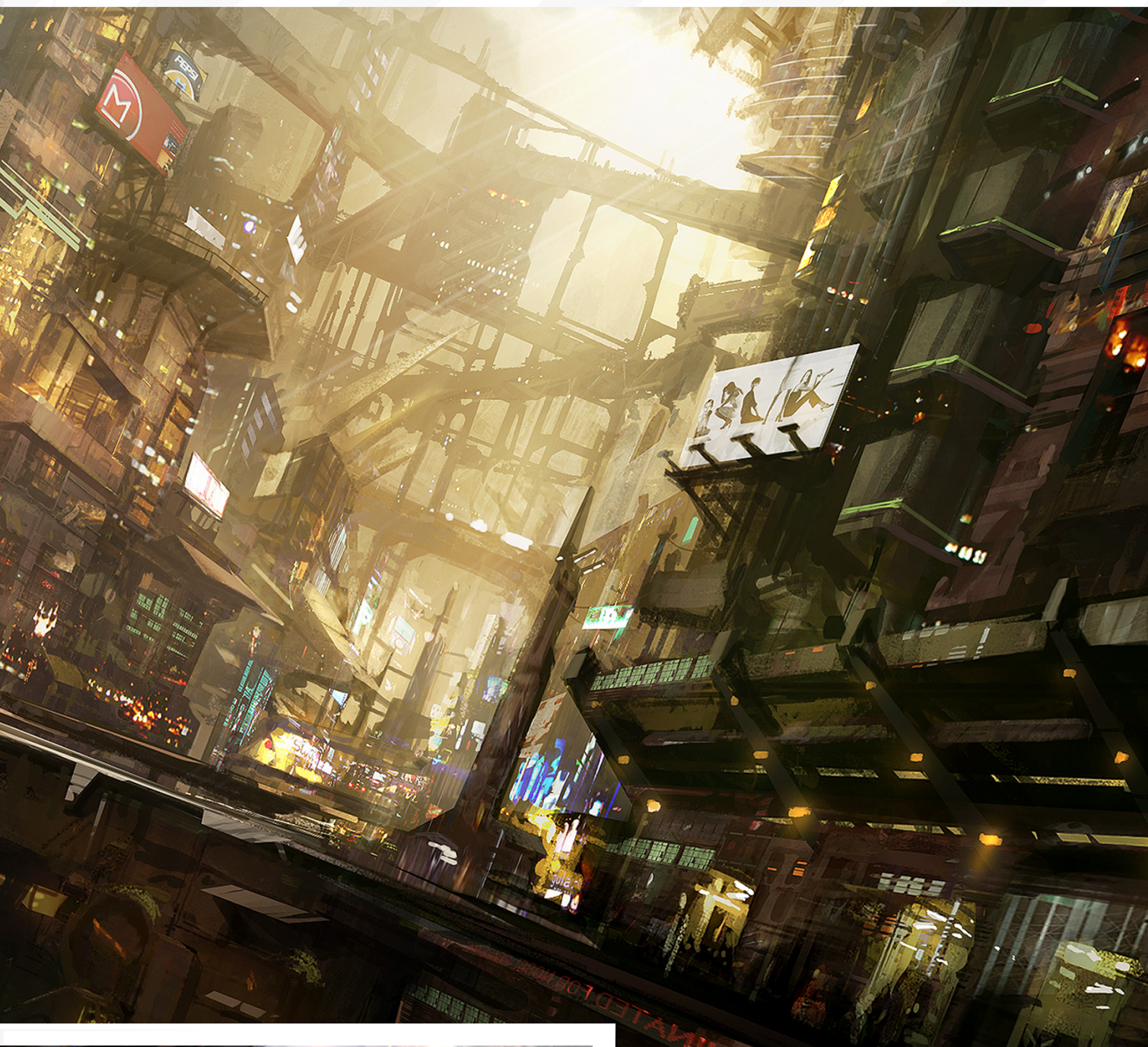




One thing that stands out the most about your artwork is that each piece is so different from the next, and each looks like there's a fascinating story behind it. How do you go about creating this in your artwork? Do you follow any set guidelines when you first start to rough out an idea or do you let your imagination run wild?

I try to keep each piece unique in concept. Then I start out simple. I have an initial story or design concept guiding my eye, i.e. a futuristic or a bombed-out city. From those simple guidelines, I gather as many references as possible. References are your best friend as an artist and cannot be overlooked. Once I start painting, I keep my mind open and basically doodle over and over until I find a shape I like. It's almost like finding shapes in the clouds. After finding a shape I like and a direction





to feed from, I continue to put down shapes to reinforce the main idea of the concept. Finding my shapes helps my mind to run free and once I find something, it opens up more and more ideas and options.

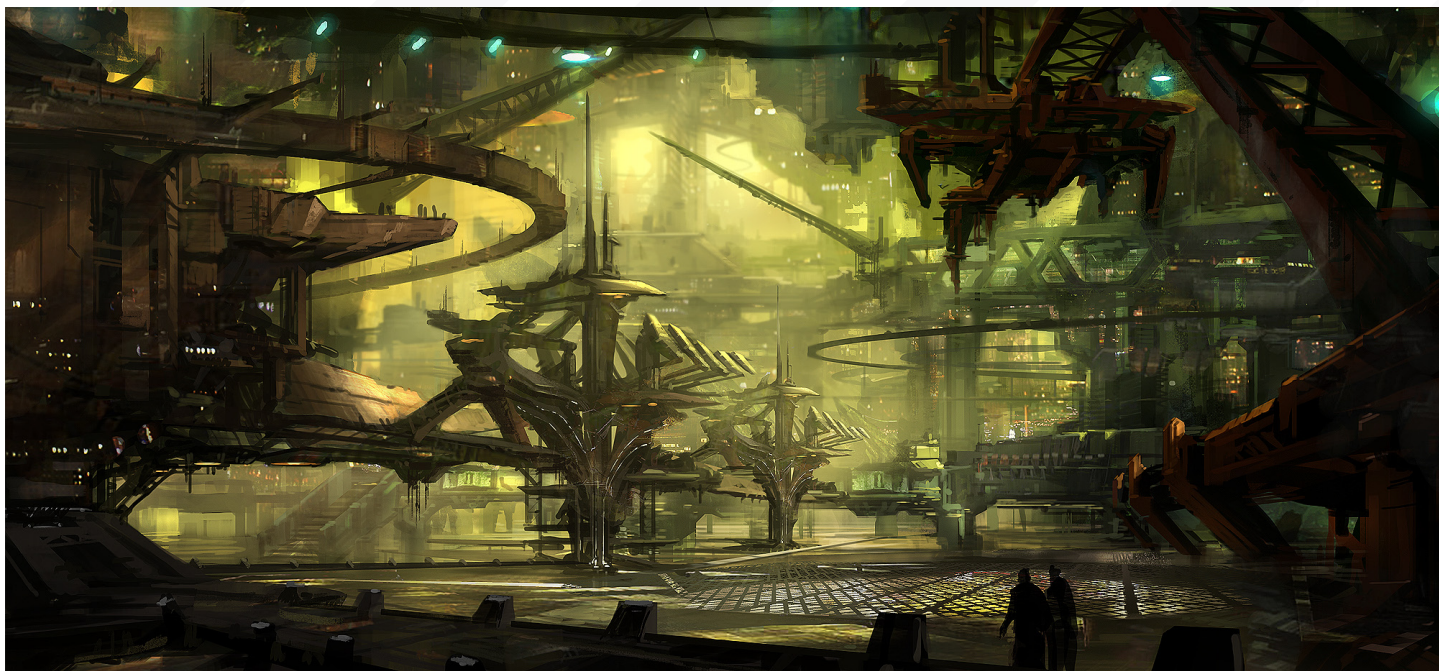
I've got your "Barbarian" image set as my desktop image at the moment, and it's one piece that really makes me want to pick up a pencil and start to sketch. What was the inspiration behind this piece and how long did it take you to produce it?

Being mainly an environment artist tends to limit my chance to do characters. "Barbarian" was initially inspired by a scene from *Troy*, with the best fighter being in the front with an army of men behind him. I took that general approach, but also wanted the main fighter to be a tough,





D
Taick
2008



non-human creature. I love taking two worlds and melding them together!

What has been your most accomplished piece of artwork to date, and why?

The most accomplished piece I have thus far is "Palace Entrance". This piece has been in numerous publications and magazines and is noted to be a piece that speaks of my ability as an artist and concept designer. I am currently working on more personal pieces.

Well it has been a real pleasure chatting with you and I wish you all the best for the future. One last question before we wrap things up: If you had to design an environment for yourself to inhabit, what would it look like, what period would you set it in, and what one element would you include within the scene to define your character?

My ideal environment would be one that took place in the near future. It would encompass elements of man-made architecture and

untouched natural elements. I love nature and having these elements in my ideal environment would be very cool!

James Paick

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.jamespaick.com/>

Or contact them at:

jpaick@yahoo.com

Interviewed by: Chris Perrins





SKETCHBOOK OF ROBERTO F. CASTRO

This month we delve into the wonderful sketchbook of Roberto F. Castro...

THE SKETCHBOOK OF ROBERTO F. CASTRO

My interest is based on the creative process,
mainly focusing on architecture, art and design.

My career as an architect has allowed me to
include a formal and constructive perspective to my
designs. This adds more reality and balance to the
final result.

Over the next few pages I've selected some
sketches without any defined criterion to show you.
Most of them were drawn for personal projects
or without any special reason. I have tried to
gather sketches with different styles, themes and
definitions. I hope you'll like my work!

ARCHITECTURE

The Citadel Tower

I think that *The Citadel Tower* is a good example
that I can use to show you the importance of
materials in architecture (**Fig.01** – pencil on paper).

The stylised shape of the tower and the sharpened
stone edges on its surface are perfect to create a
threatening atmosphere.



Fig.02



Fig.01

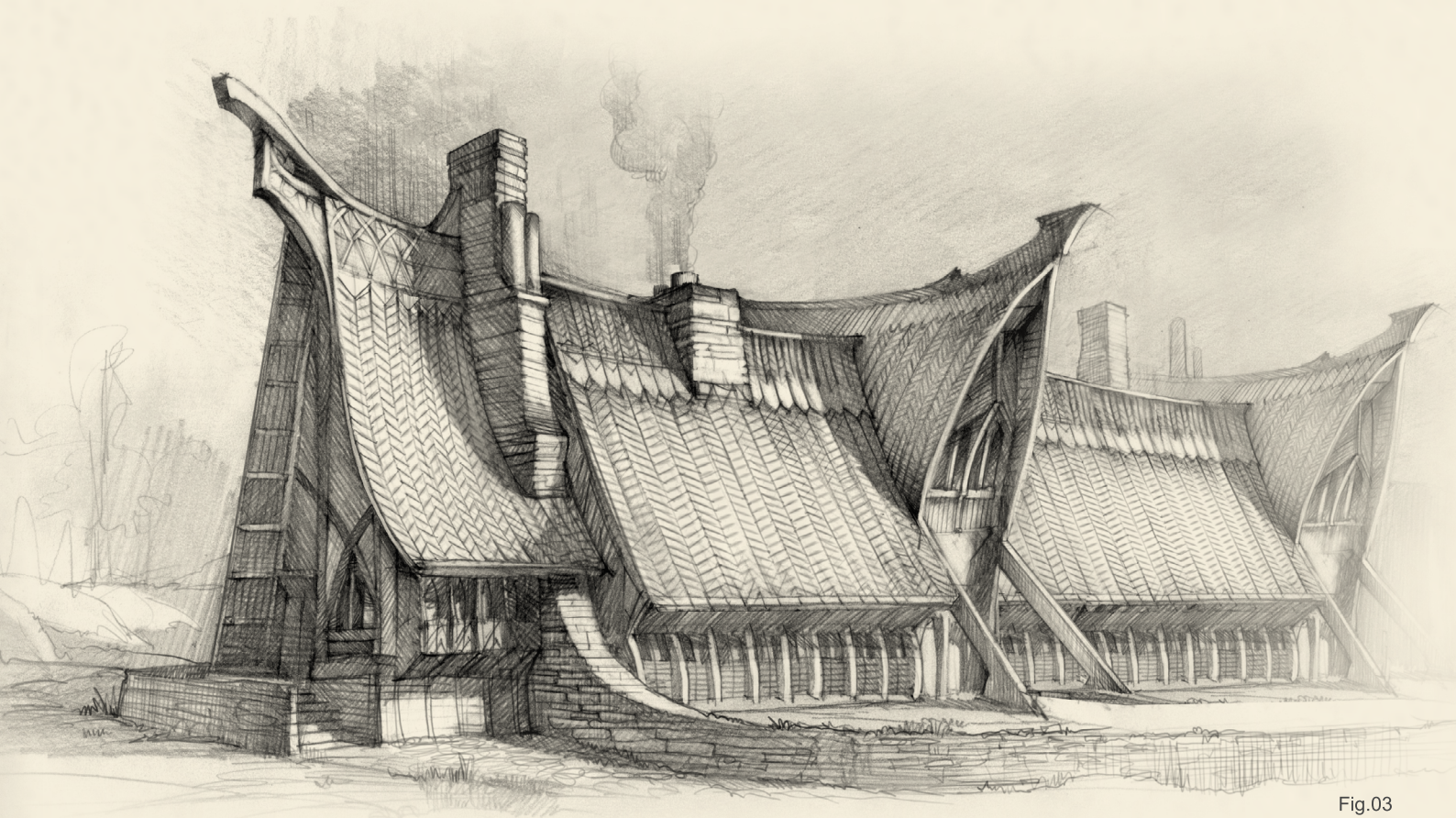


Fig.03

Architectural Studies

Here are some other architectural studies from my portfolio (**Fig.02 – 04** – pencil on paper).

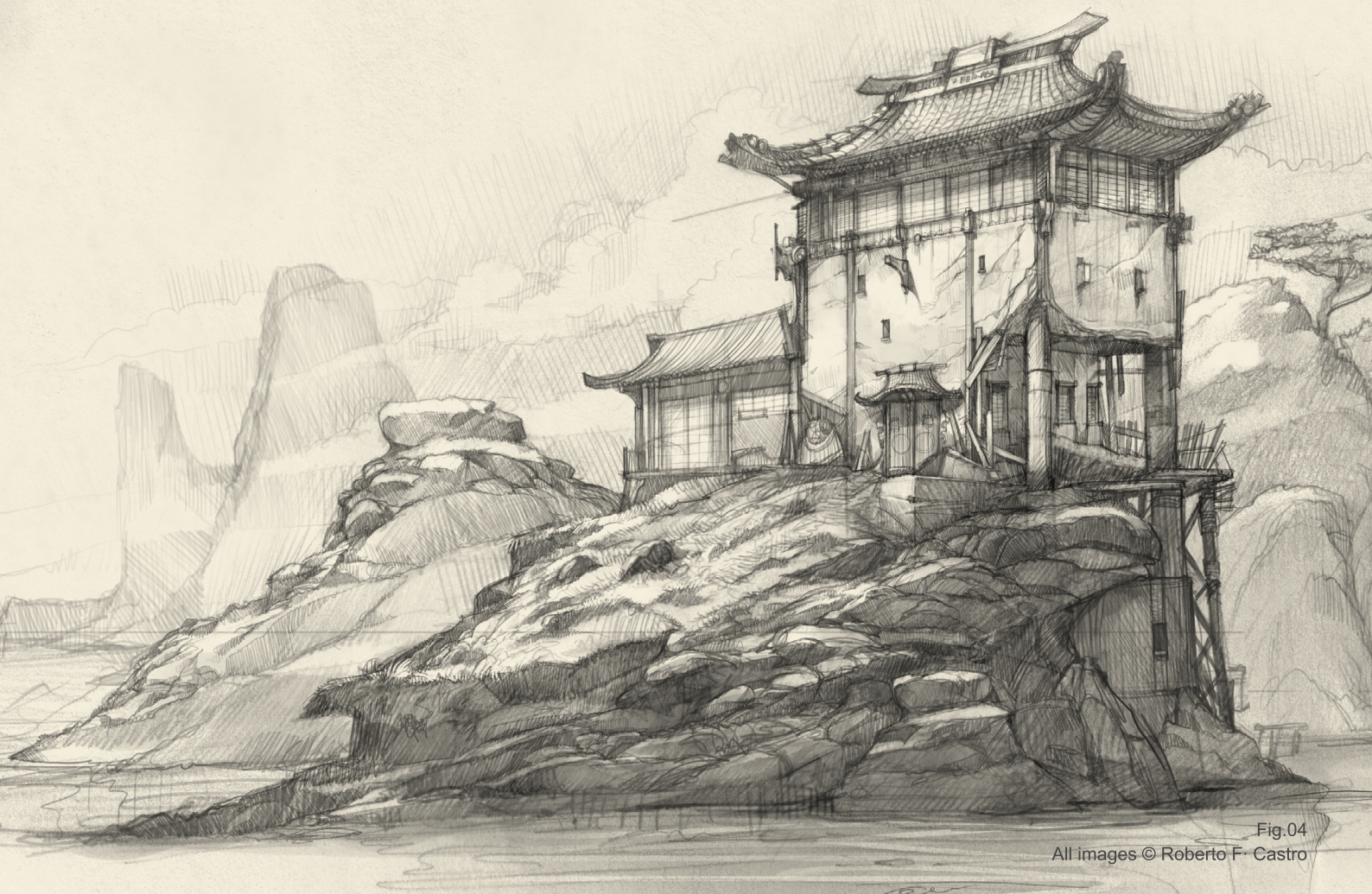


Fig.04

The Sanctuary

This sketch was used as a reference for a 3D model. The final result of this wooden building is very close to this original sketch. One of the most important things in architecture is the constructive and structural logic of the design (Fig.05a – pencil on paper, Fig.05b – 3d Studio Max and Photoshop).



Fig.05b © Roberto F. Castro

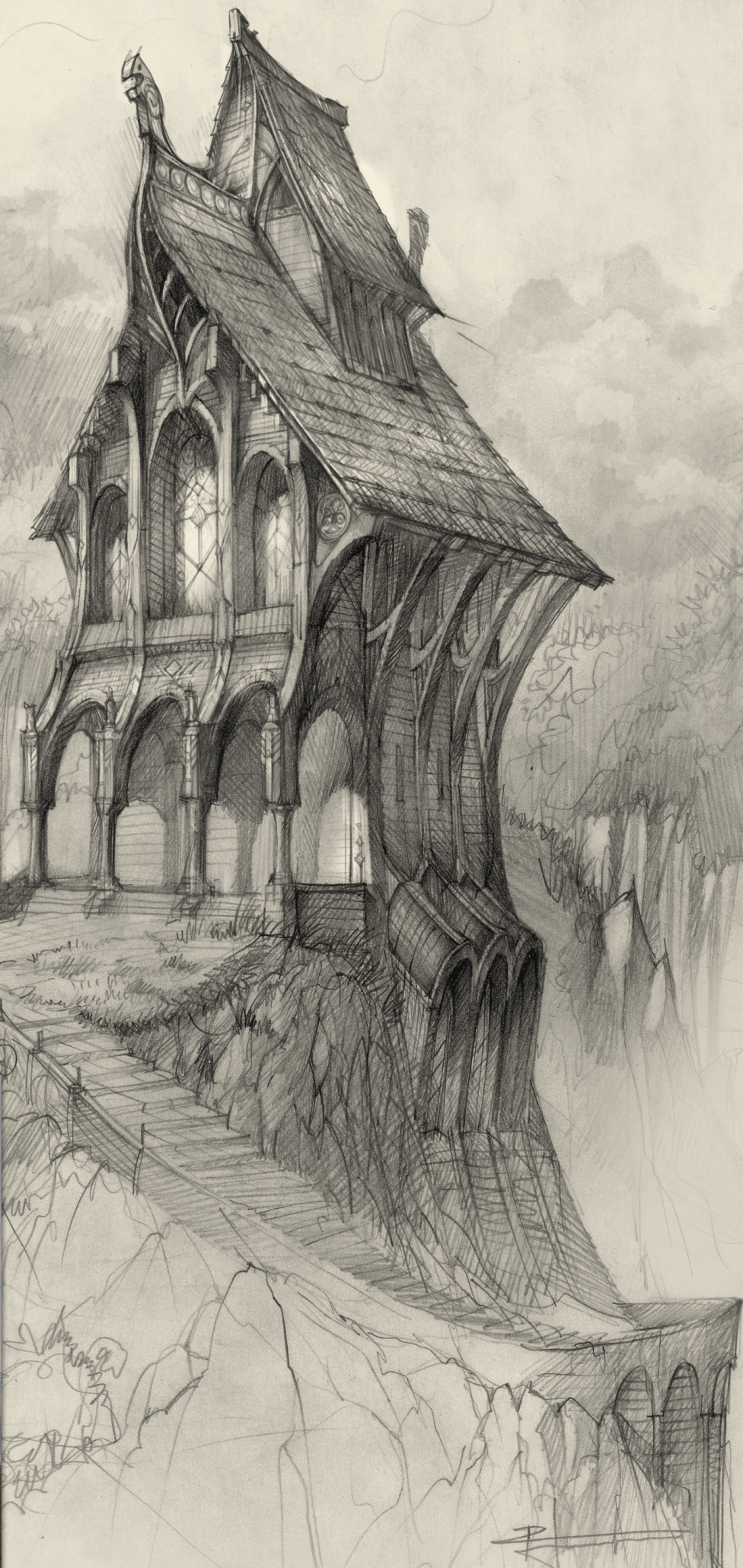


Fig.05a © Roberto F. Castro

CHARACTERS

The Bounty Hunter

I've selected these images to show you two different sketching styles of the same theme:

The Bounty Hunter (Fig.06 – 07 – pencil on paper). When sketching, it's extremely important to have a versatile drawing technique that allows you as an artist to perfectly adapt to any kind of project.

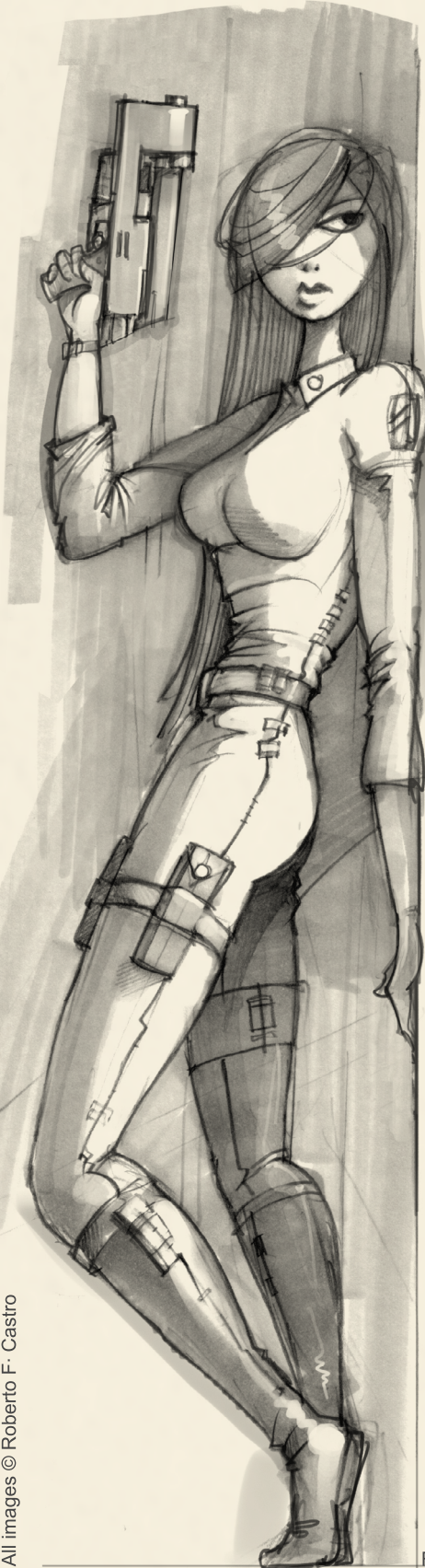


Fig.07



Fig.06



Fig.08

Costume Designs

These are three examples of costume designs (Fig.08 – 10 – pencil on paper). I selected these three images because they have different drawing styles. I like to experiment with drawing techniques; the girl with the dress is a more careful and static style than the vivid and rough style of the space marine. Any technique is useful to achieve success if you have a good idea to start.



Fig.09



Fig.10

CREATURES

Creature Heads

Here are some creature head designs (**Fig.11 – 12** – pencil on paper).

Troll & Zombie

The troll and zombie are examples of creature design using a sharp and dense pencil (**Fig.13 – 14** – pencil on paper).



Fig.11



Fig.12

Fig.13



Fig.14

MECHANICAL

Combat Droid

The combat droid is an example of typical concept art (**Fig.15** – pencil and marker on paper). This is a vigorous and quick drawing, with vivid strokes and a well balanced design. The marker pen is a perfect tool to make quick sketches with a professional result.

All-Terrain Transport

This all-terrain transport sketch is a perfect example of the combined use of traditional and digital tools. In this painting I've showed the original scanned pencil drawing to compare it with the final result (**Fig.16a – 16b** – pencil on paper and digital colour).

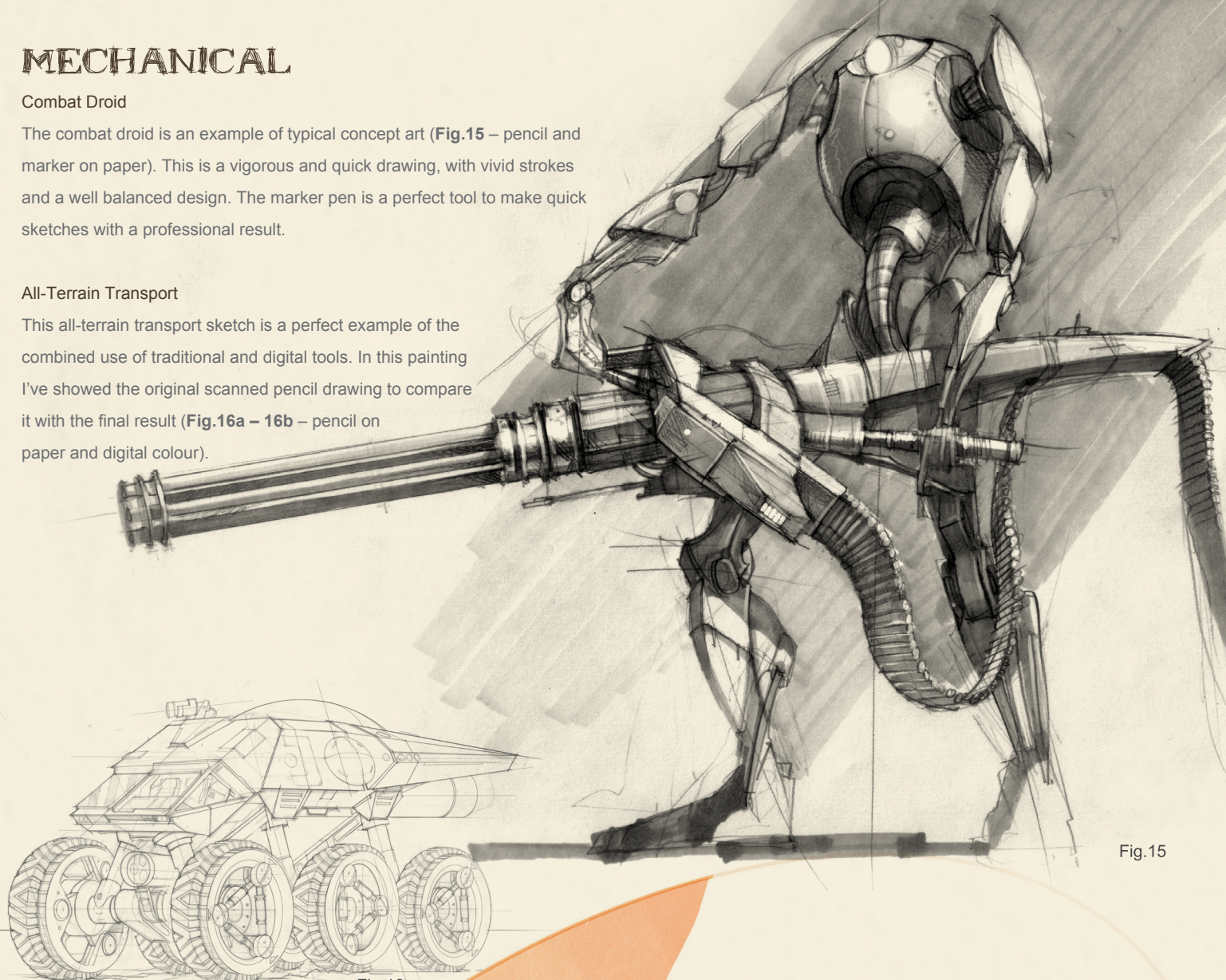


Fig.15

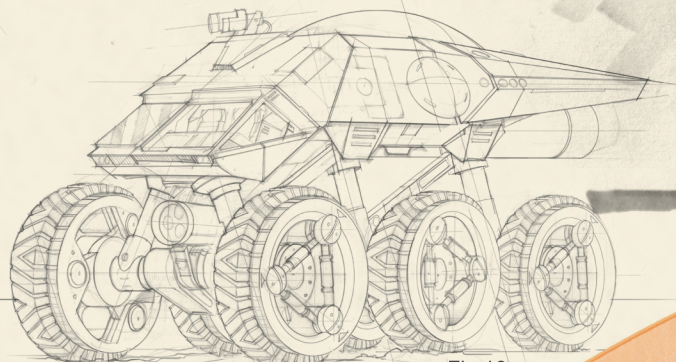


Fig.16a

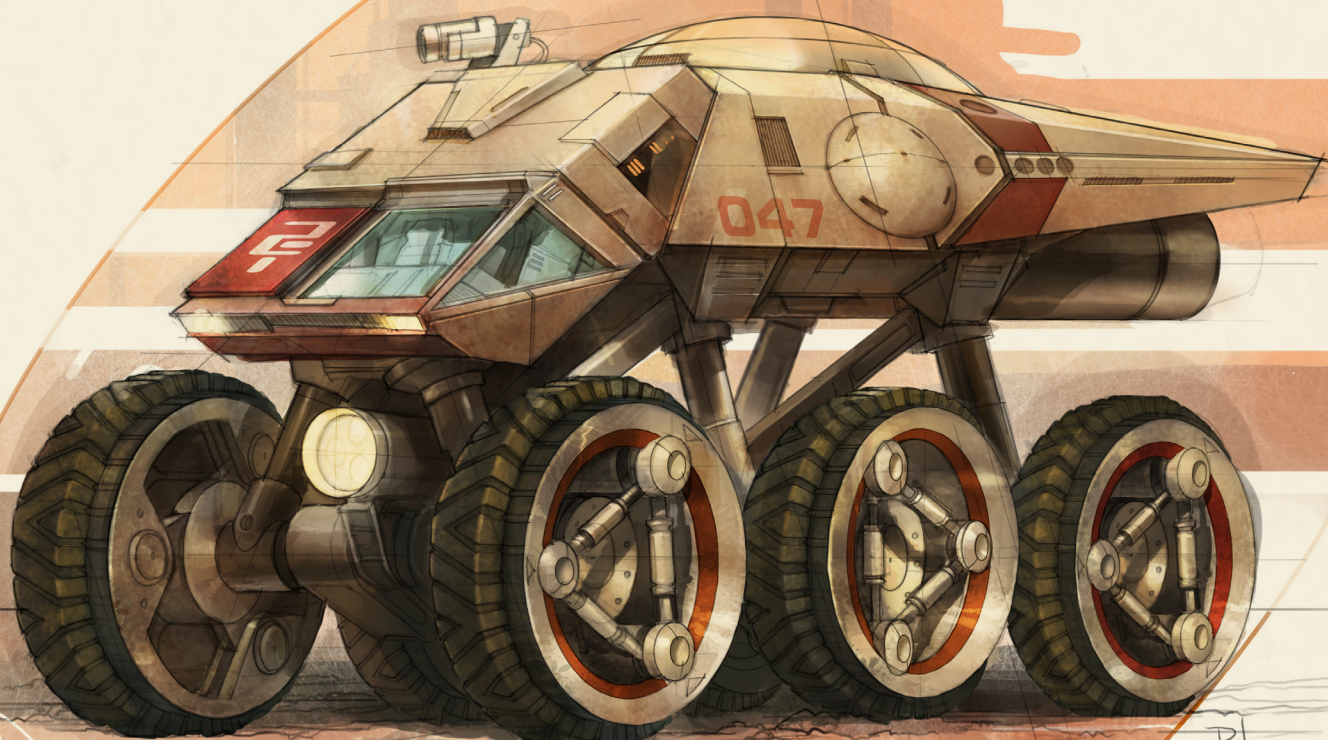


Fig.16b

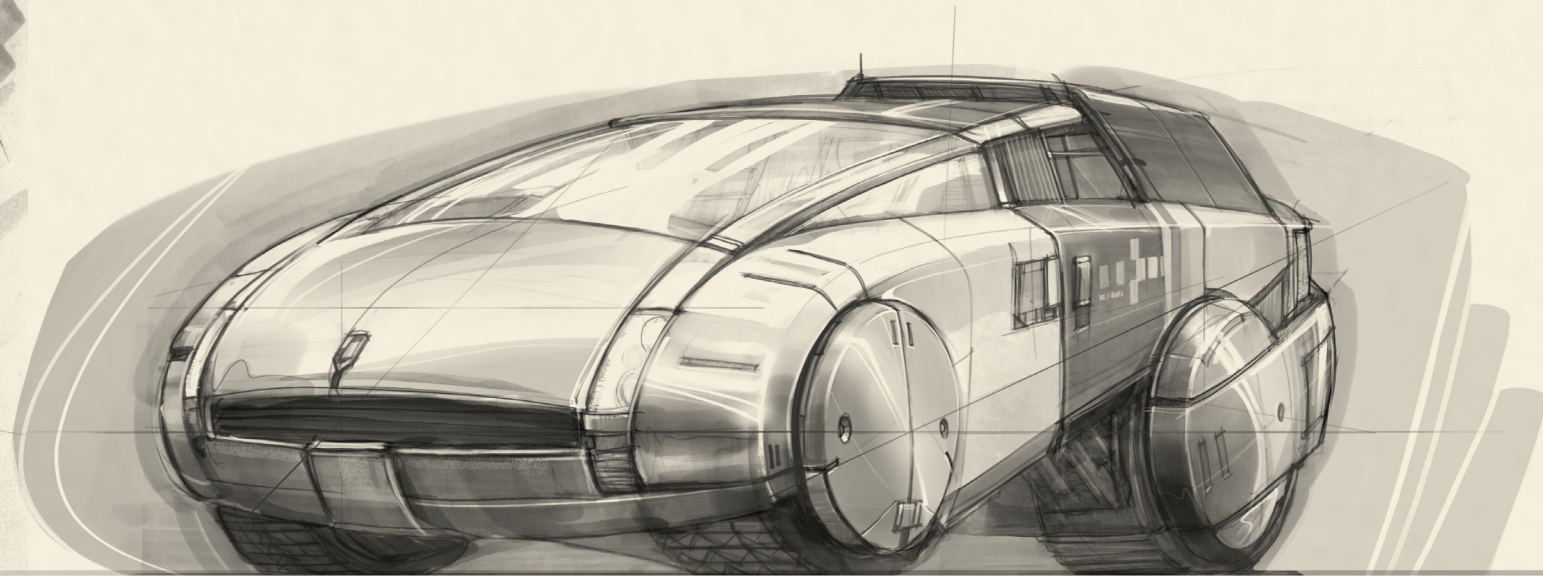


Fig.17

Futuristic Vehicle

I like clear designs where the viewer can quickly understand the volume and geometry. This futuristic car is a good example of this (Fig.17 – pencil on paper, marker and digital retouching).

Racing Vehicles

These two designs are some sketches for an engine illustration (Fig.18a – 18c – pencil on paper, marker and digital retouching).

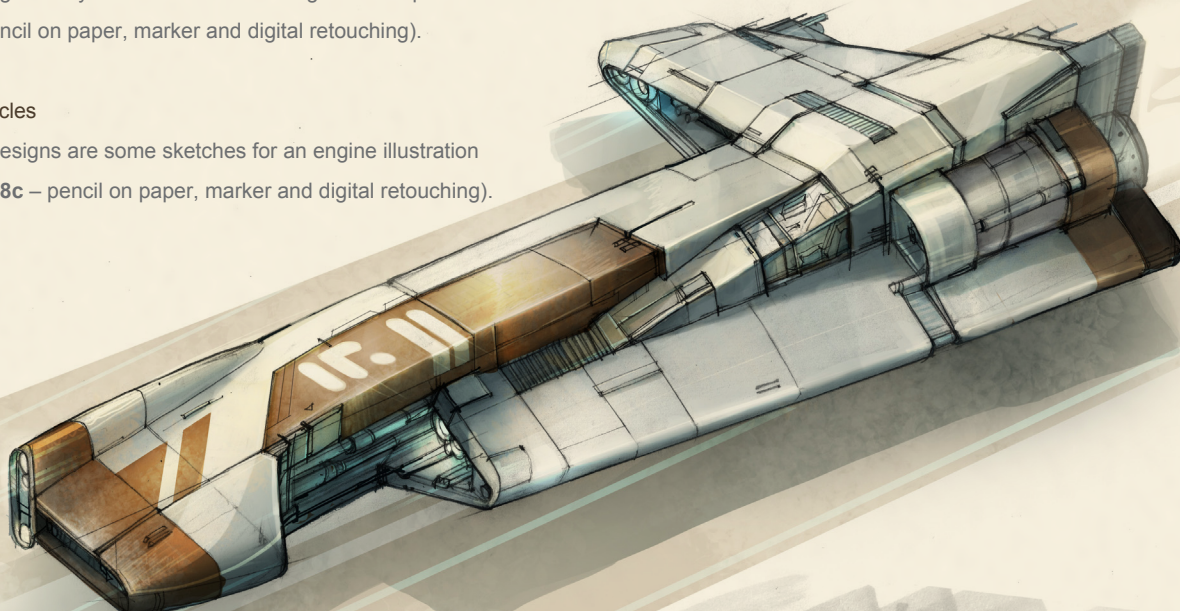


Fig.18a

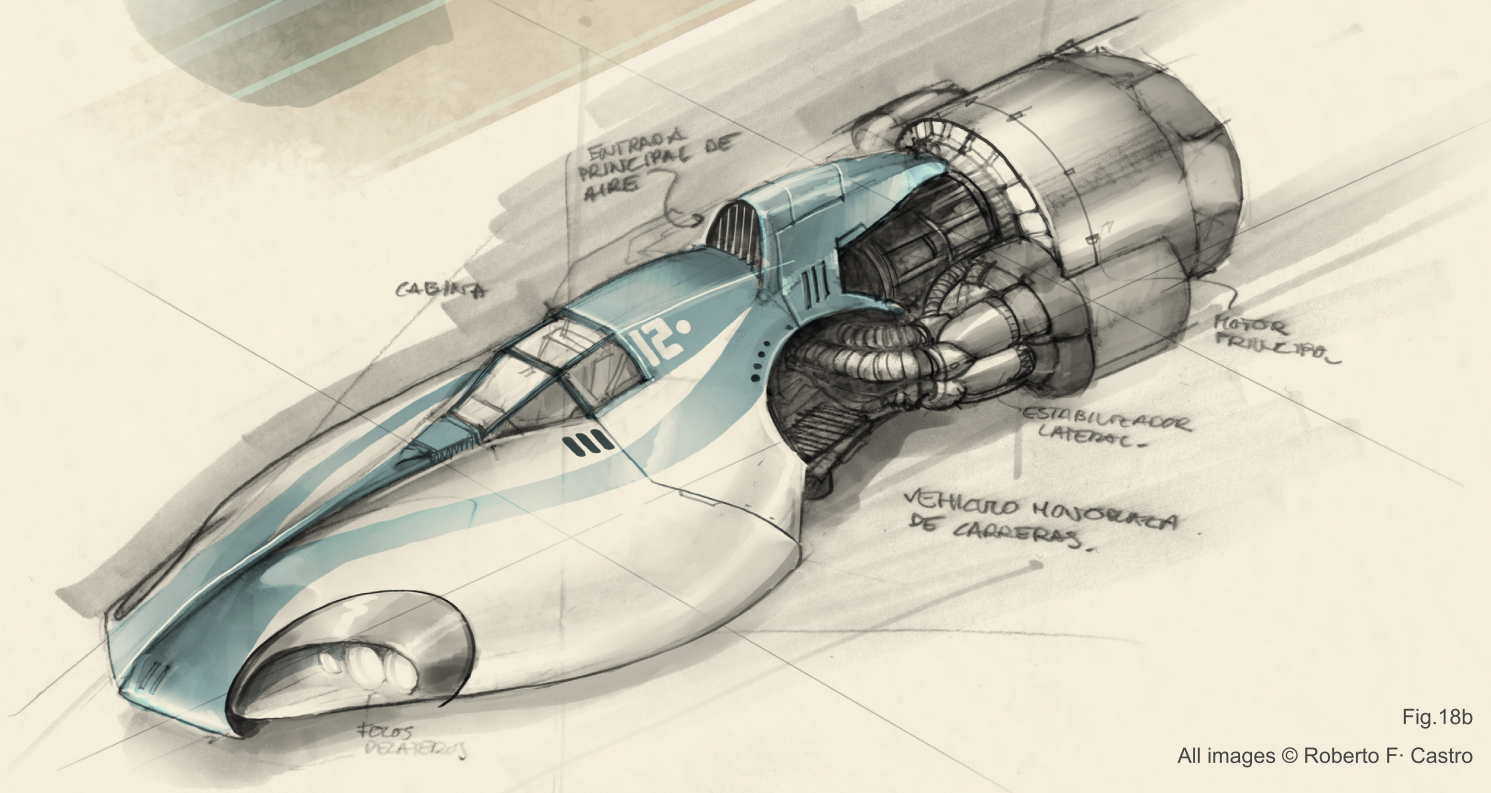


Fig.18b



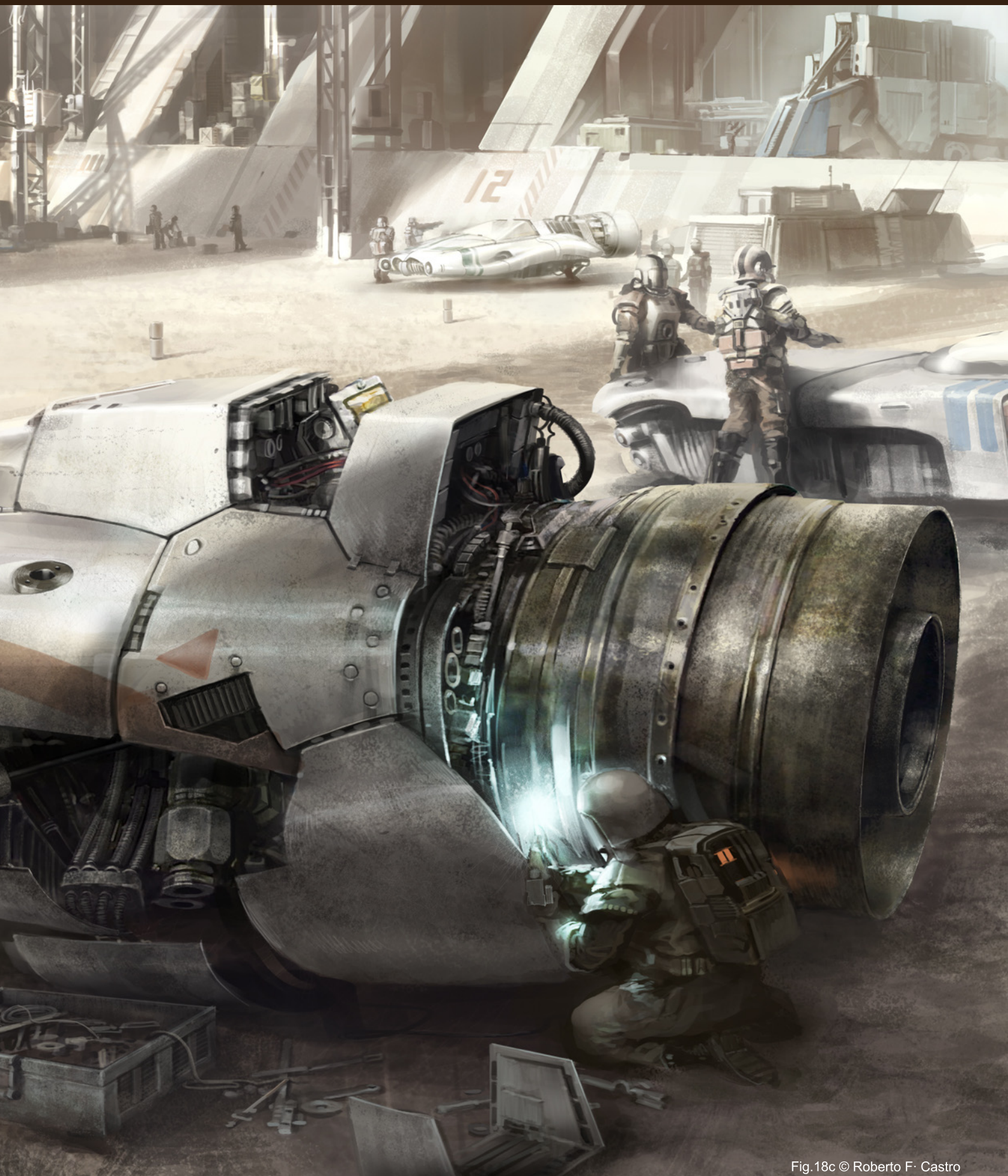


Fig.18c © Roberto F. Castro

OBJECTS

One of the most interesting things in concept sketching is object design (Fig.19 – 23 – pencil on paper). A great part of the success of a creature or character (etc.) design is down to the small objects that accompany it.

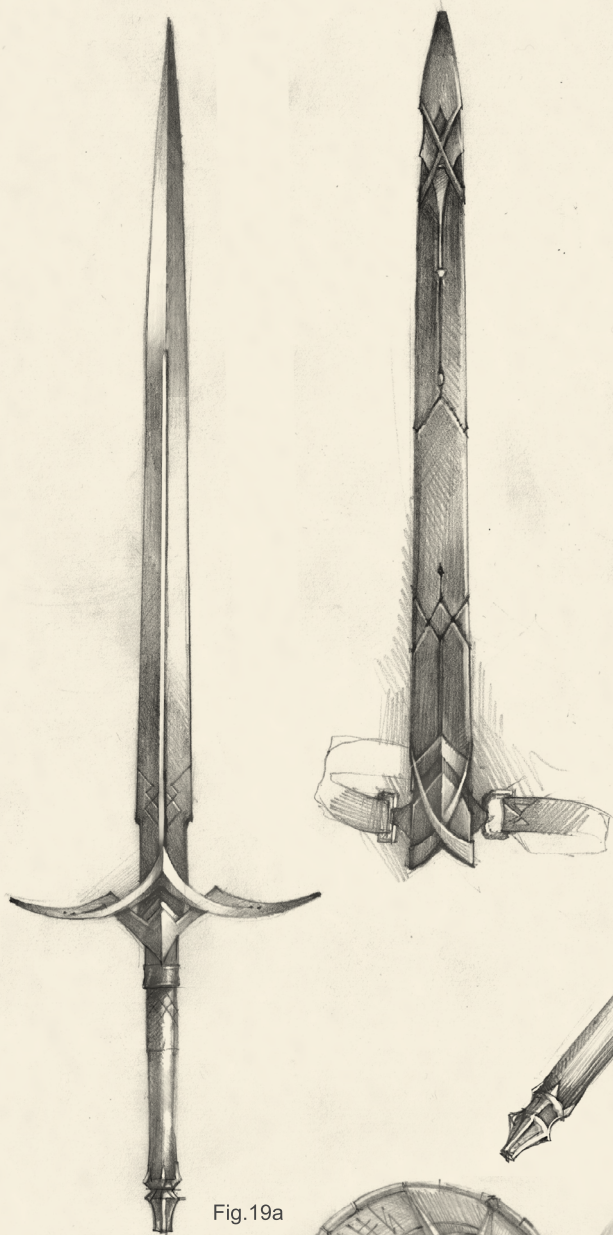


Fig.19a

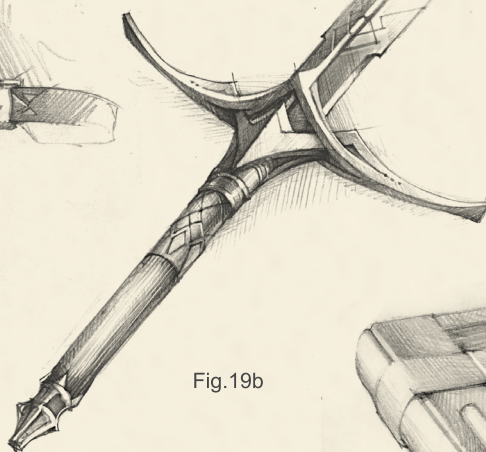


Fig.19b

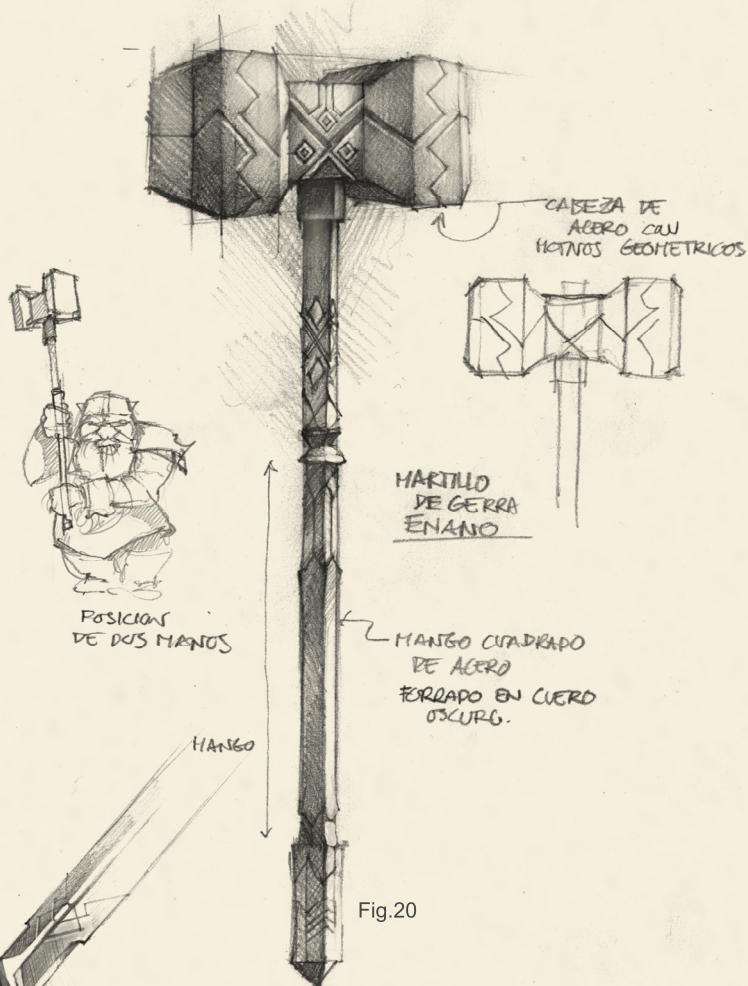


Fig.20

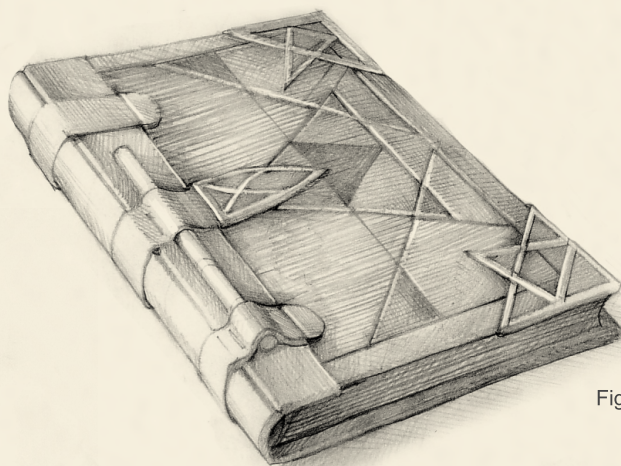


Fig.21

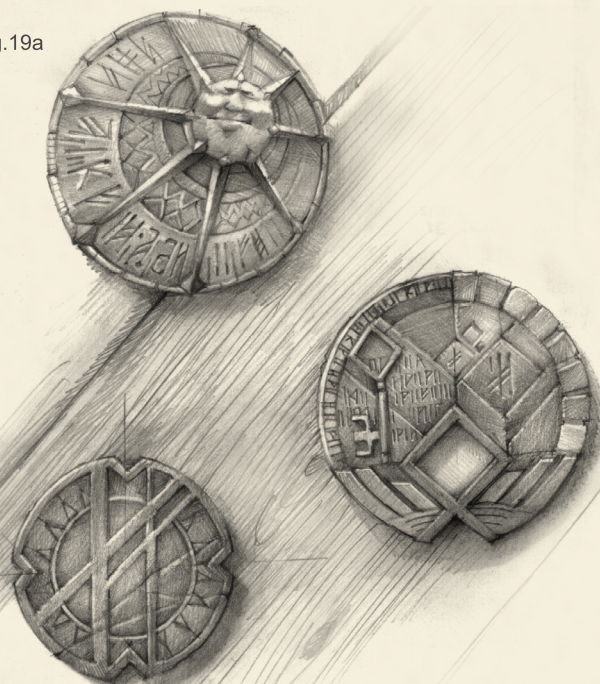


Fig.22



Fig.23

ARCHITECTURE PROJECTS

I have selected a few sketches to compare the previous studies of architectural projects with the final results. It's both very important, as well as difficult, to transform conceptual sketches into real objects. Good designs and clear concepts in the previous sketches are one of the essential aspects of architectural designs (**Fig.24** – Main Hall pre-visualisation, pencil on paper and digital colour; **Fig.25a – 25c** – Kunsthalle Art Centre, pencil on paper; **Fig.26** – Town Hall pre-visualisation, pencil on paper and digital colour).

Roberto F. Castro

For more information please visit:

<http://www.robertofc.com>

Or contact:

contact@robertofc.com

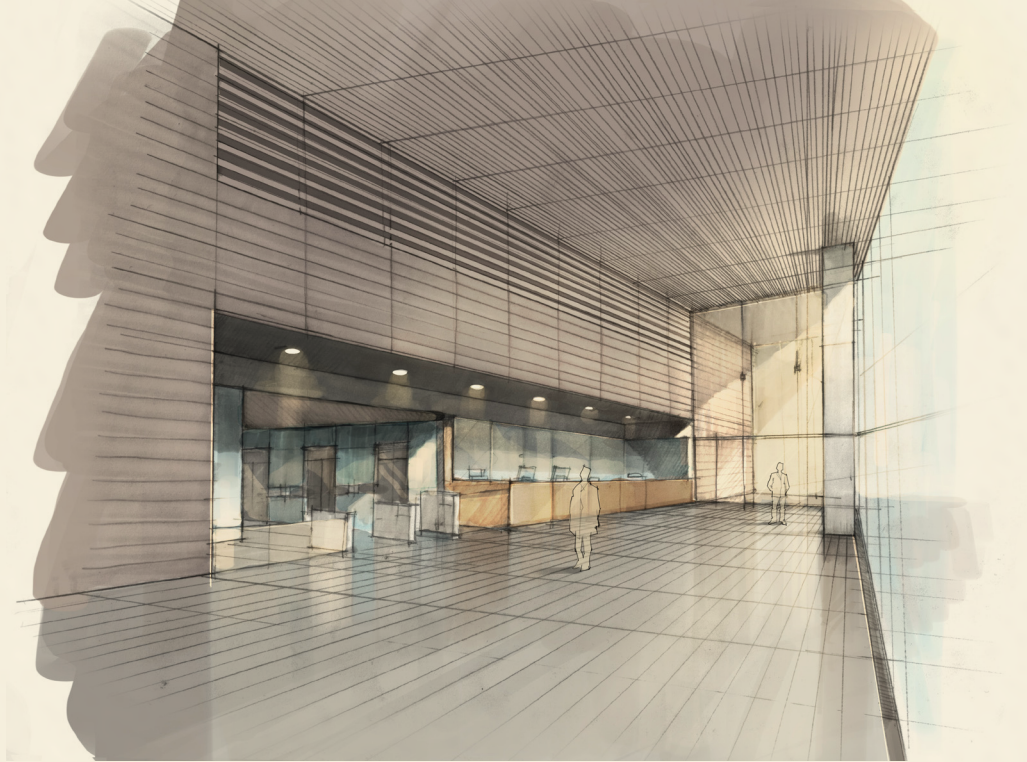


Fig.24

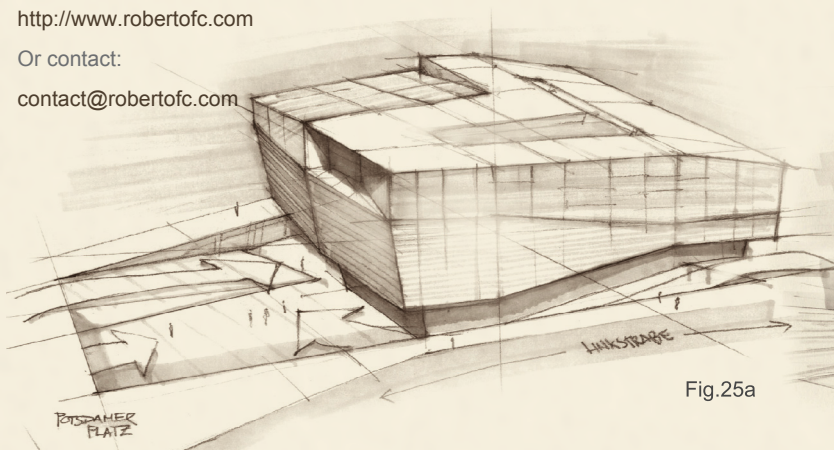


Fig.25a

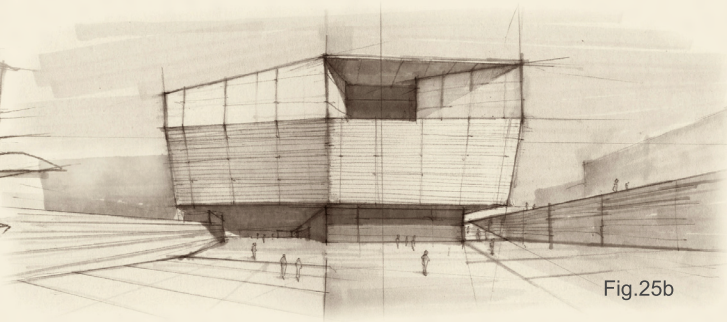


Fig.25b



Fig.25c

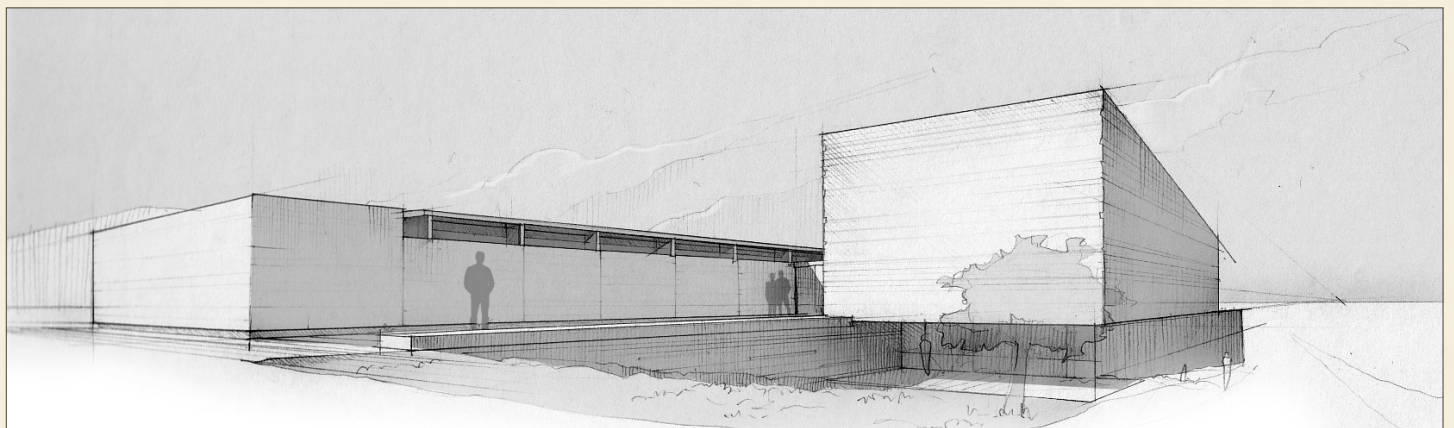


Fig.26



Vancouver Film School alumni credits include **Across the Universe** Geeta Basantani, Digital Composer **Alias** Scott Dewis, Visual Effects Artist **Ant Bully** Ben Sanders, Character Animator | Rani Naamani, Animator | Ernesto Bottger, Character Animator **AVP: Alien Vs. Predator** Shawn Walsh, Color & Lighting Technical Director **Babel** Luis Blackaller, Storyboard Artist | Lon Molnar, Visual Effects Supervisor **Battlestar Galactica** Daniel Osaki, Lead Modeler | Megan Majewski, 3D Animator | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Blizzard Entertainment** Alvaro Buendia, Cinematic Artist **Bolt** Lino Di Salvo, Supervising Animator/Voice of Vinnie **Charlotte's Web** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer | Adam Yaniv, Character Animator | Tony Etienne, Lead Lighter Kristin Sedore, Lighter **Chicago** Lon Molnar, Animation Supervisor **The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe** Kristin Sedore, Lighter | Shawn Walsh, Lighter | Adam Yaniv, Character Animator **The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian** Andreas Hikel, Pre-Visualization Artist | Christoph Schinko, Character Animator | Jami Gigot, Senior Layout Artist **Cloverfield** Nicholas Markel, Pre-Visualization Supervisor **Constantine** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer **The Dark Knight** Pietro Ponti, Lead CG Lighting Artist **Dead Like Me** Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Diablo III** Alvaro Buendia, Cinematic Artist | Steven Chen, Cinematic Artist **Family Guy** Michael Loya, Storyboard Artist **Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer** Arun Ram-Mohan, Lighting Technical Director | Shawn Walsh, Visual Effects Executive Producer | Jessica Alcorn, Composer **Flags of our Fathers** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer **Gears of War (VG)** Scott Dossett, Animator

The Godfather (VG) Kirk Chantraine, Motion Capture Specialist **The Golden Compass** Adam Yaniv, Animator | Chad Moffitt, Animator | Thom Roberts, Animator | Ben Sanders, Animator Andrew Lawson, Animator | Matthias Lowry, Visual Effects | Tony Etienne, Look Development Justin Hammond, Lighter Pearl Hsu, Effects Technical Director | Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer | Fion Mok, Matchmove Artist

Your name here.

Hairspray Lon Molnar, Visual Effects Production Executive **Halo 3** Bartek Kujbida, Character Animator **Happy Feet** Ben Sanders, Character Animator | Thom Roberts, Character Animator **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban** Shawn Walsh, Color & Lighting Technical Director **Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix** Pietro Ponti, Technical Director **Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince** Harry Mukhopadhyay, Lead Effects Technical Director **Hellboy** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer **Hellboy II: The Golden Army** Christoph Ammann, 3D Sequence Supervisor **Horton Hears a Who** Arun Ram-Mohan, Lighting Technical Director | Brent Wong, Modeler **Hulk** Geoff Richardson, Visual Effects Editor **I, Robot** Daniel Osaki, CGI Modeler | Megan Majewski, Pre-Visualization **Ice Age: The Meltdown** Ben Sanders, Character Animator | Arun Ram-Mohan, Lighting Technical Director **The Incredible Hulk** Shawn Walsh, Visual Effects Executive Producer Tony Etienne, Look Development Lead **Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull** Henri Tan, Creature Technical Director **Iron Man** Adam Marisset, Visual Effects Artist **King Kong** Chad Moffitt, Senior Animator **King of the Hill** Michael Loya, Director **Kingdom Hospital** Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist | Megan Majewski, 3D Animator | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Kingdom of Heaven** Shawn Walsh, Digital Composer **Letters from Iwo Jima** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer **Live Free or Die Hard** Jessica Alcorn, Composer **Lord of the Rings Trilogy** Chad Moffitt, Senior Animator **Lost** Scott Dewis, Visual Effects Artist **Lucasfilm Animation Singapore** Sandro Di Segni, Senior Effects Technical Director/Lead Digital Artist | Ming Chang, Lighting Technical Director | Adrian Ng Chee Wei, Character Animator Seema Gopalakrishnan, CG Software Developer **Mass Effect (VG)** Sung-Hun (Ryan) Lim, 3D Modeler **Matrix: Revolutions** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer | Shawn Walsh, Color & Lighting Technical Director **Master & Commander: The Far Side of the World** Robert Bourgeault, CG Artist **Metal Gear Solid 4 (VG)** Josh Herrig, Artist | Yuta Shimizu, Artist **The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer **Night at the Museum** Allen Holbrook, Animator | Adam Yaniv, Character Animator | Chad Moffitt, Animator | Kristin Sedore, Lighter **Persepolis** Marianne Lebel, Animator **Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End** Ben Sanders, Character Animator Allen Holbrook, Animator | Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer **The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything: A VeggieTales Movie** Mike Dharney, Animation Supervisor **Reign of Fire** Lino DiSalvo, Animator **Resident Evil: Extinction** Joshua Herrig, Visual Effects Artist **Robots** Arun Ram-Mohan, Additional Lighting **Rome** Teh-Wei Yeh, Matchmove Artist **The Santa Clause 2** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist **Scarface (VG)** Maya Zuckerman, Mocap 3D Generalist **Shrek the Third** Rani Naamani, Animator **Shrek the Third (VG)** Samuel Tung, Technical Artist **Sin City** Michael Cozens, Lead Animator **Smallville** Geeta Basantani, Lead Composer **Speed Racer** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer **Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith** Andrew Doucette, Character Animator | Nicholas Markel, Pre-Visualization **Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (VG)** Arun Ram-Mohan, 3D Artist | Jessica Mih, Level Artist **Stargate SG-1** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositing Artist | Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist | Shawn Walsh, Digital Effects Supervisor **Stargate: Atlantis** Daniel Osaki, 3D Animator | Megan Majewski, 3D Animator | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street** Jami Gigot, Concept Artist **Transformers** Allen Holbrook, Animator | Henri Tan, Creature Technical Director

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Unreal Tournament III (VG) Scott Dossett, Artist **Valiant** Robert Bourgeault, Lighting Technical Director **Viva Pinata** Megan Majewski, Animator **WALL-E** Mark Shirra, Layout Artist **Watchmen** Jelmer Boskma, Previs Modeler | Lon Molnar, Visual Effects Supervisor | Cynthia Rodriguez del Castillo, Visual Effects Artist **World of Warcraft: Burning Crusade (VG)** Carman Cheung, Animator **A Wrinkle in Time** Aruna Inversin, Digital Composer and many more.



THE GALLERY

This month we feature:

Ioan Dumitrescu aka Jonone

Xin Xin

Murat Turan

Marcos Correa

Richard Pellegrino

Donglu Yu

Roberto Oleotto

Eduardo Peña

Robin Olausson

Rasmus Jensen

Transition

Murat Turan

<http://designtu.deviantart.com/>

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© Murat Turan

Points of View

Roberto Oleotto

<http://www.onthesign.it>

on@onthesign.it



© Roberto Oleotto

New Times

Ioan Dumitrescu aka Jonone

jononespo@yahoo.com



Triumphant Return Of The Ming Dynasty Naval

Xin Xin

<http://www.xinx.name>

xin.x@hotmail.com

© Xin Xin





Overlooking the Ming Dynasty (world)	Xin Xin
Matte painting - ocean - sea	2007.1.9



© Rich Pellegrino

Take What You Want

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Reason's

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Geisha

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© Eduardo Peña



Hansel and Gretel

Donglu Yu

dl_yu@hotmail.com



Industry Bot

Robin Olausson

<http://www.robinolausson.com/>

tv1000@spray.se

Check back in with 2DArtist next month for an interview with Robin Olausson!



Hades

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<http://rasmusillustration.dk/>

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Welcome to the Stylised Challenge!

Every month we run this challenge, which is open for anyone to enter. The challenge runs in the conceptart.org forums and winners get to choose prizes and goodies from the www.3dtotal.com shop! They're also featured in this very magazine, where we display the winners from the previous month's challenge, as well as the "Making Of's" from the month before that.

Big Foot

Stylised Challenge

20p '09

Stylised Challenge Big Foot

The Challenge

Welcome to the Super Stylised Monthly Challenge. Each month we select a theme and post some images in the **Forum Thread** for reference. All you have to do is to create a 2D image in line with this theme in a stylised / abstract / cartoon style, whilst keeping your

10th



Murdokx

9th



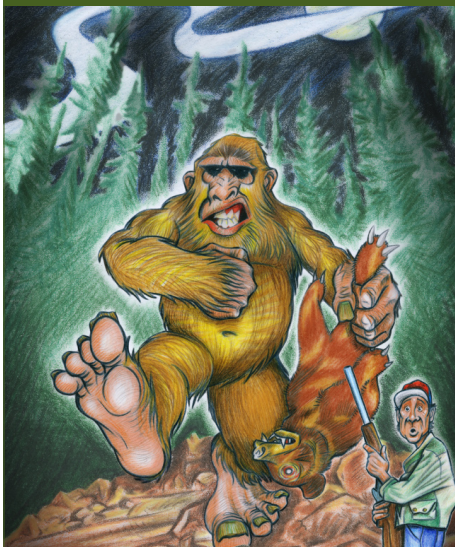
Rosa Hughes - Rosatron
rosatron@gmail.com
<http://www.rosatron.com/>

9th



Tom van Wanrooy - Tommoy
info@thecartoonfactory.nl
<http://www.thecartoonfactory.nl>

8th



Jason Smith - Macaruba
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<http://www.macaruba.com>

7th



Arturo Aguirre - Artina
artinastudio@gmail.com
<http://artinastudio.blogspot.com>

6th



Richard G.D. Baker - The Antarctic
cirqus@cirqus.com
<http://www.cirqus.com>

image instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 2DArtist magazine on how to create stylised images, such as you see in the many feature films and cartoon galleries. We thought this regular competition might bring in just the images and "Making Of's" that we need, whilst giving away great prizes and exposure.

This month's theme was **"Big Foot"**. Here you can see the top placed entries, as voted for by the public.

What are we looking for?

Funny and humorous entries which break the theme down to its most recognisable components; emphasise these in whichever ways you think best, and render your stylised / abstract / cartoon masterpiece. The rules are pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 3D render (minor post work is OK); it's up to you if you want to have a background; include some graphical

5th



Pepps

4th



Dirkvandulmen

3rd



Dave Neale - Daveneale
davejneale@hotmail.com
<http://www.daveneale.co.uk>

2nd



Ruth2m - Ruth Martinez
ruth2m@gmail.com
<http://ruth2m.com>

elements or text on your image. Renders of the 800 pixel dimension sound about right, but the winners will be featured in 2DArtist Magazine, so if you can create some higher res images too then all the better!

There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, just make sure your final image is posted in the main competition thread before the deadline. We require the top three winners to submit "Making Of" overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal or in 2DArtist Magazine. These need to show the stages of your creation - different elements and some brief explanation text - of why, and how, you did what you did. We will format this into some nice-looking pages to give you some great exposure, and us some quality content. Each competition will have one main thread which starts with the brief at the top. All entrants should post all WIP's, give feedback and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month...

Challenge Thread

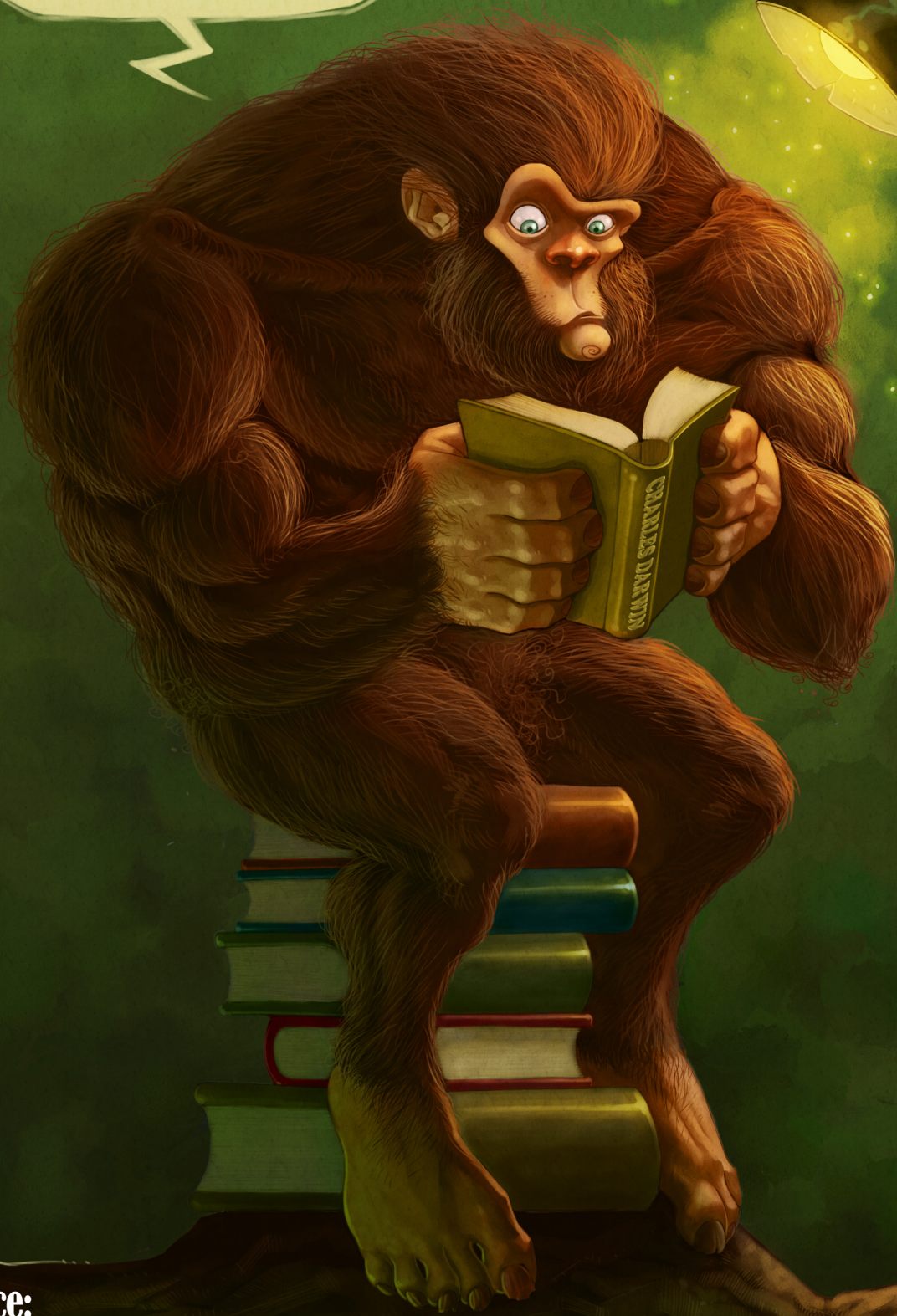
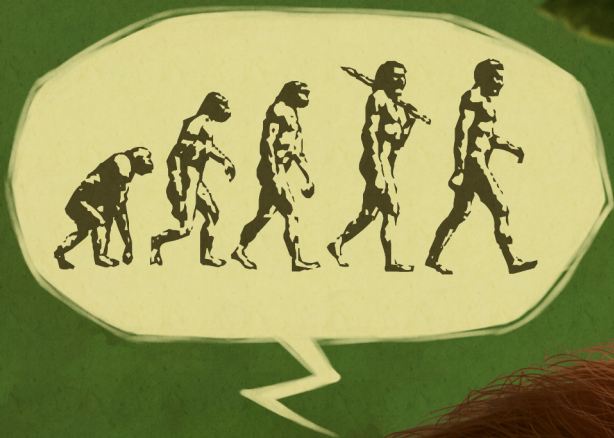
The entire **Big Foot** competition can be viewed [Here](#)

The current challenge at the voting stage is: **Cyclops**

The current challenge taking place is: **Centaur**

To join the next challenge, or to view previous, and / or current entries, please visit: www.conceptart.org

Or contact: Lynette@zoopublishing.com



**1st Place:
RoLox - Rolando Mallada**

rolocomic@yahoo.com.ar

<http://rolando-mallada.blogspot.com/>

© Rolando Mallada

RoLo '09

Making Of's

Here are the "Making Of's" from last month's top three winning entries...

3rd Tommoy

Software Used: Photoshop

To be honest, I wasn't going to join this challenge at first, but after I saw what the others were coming up with I felt inspired to try something too. Brainstorming on how I would imagine a troll, different ways of interpreting it came to mind. *The Lord of the Rings* cave troll kind of creature was in my thoughts, but I chose more of a traditional, maybe even European, kind of troll. A creature that lives in the woods: ugly, hairy and dirty-looking; smaller than a human child; a little dumb, with a bad attitude; living on small animals and other forest creatures like leprechauns.

I began sketching and soon I had a troll that was half hanging in a tree after being disturbed by a trespasser (**Fig.01a**). I changed the look on his face from the original sketch; giving him more of a "should I be scared of you or should you be scared of me" feel (**Fig.01b**). Now he looked a bit more scared, but also friendlier at the same time. I still wasn't sure about the position of the legs and arms at this stage.



Fig.01a



Fig.01b

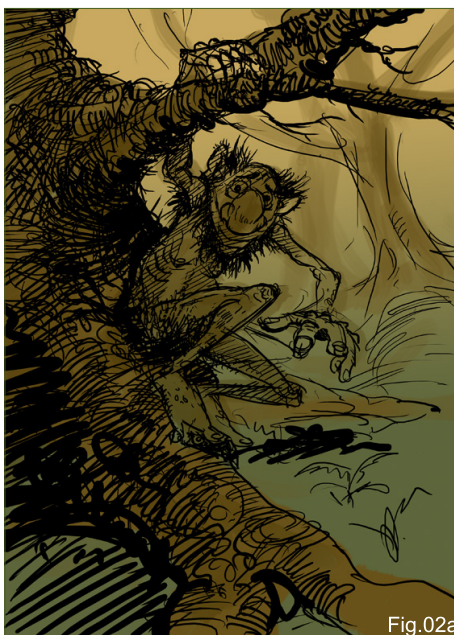


Fig.02a

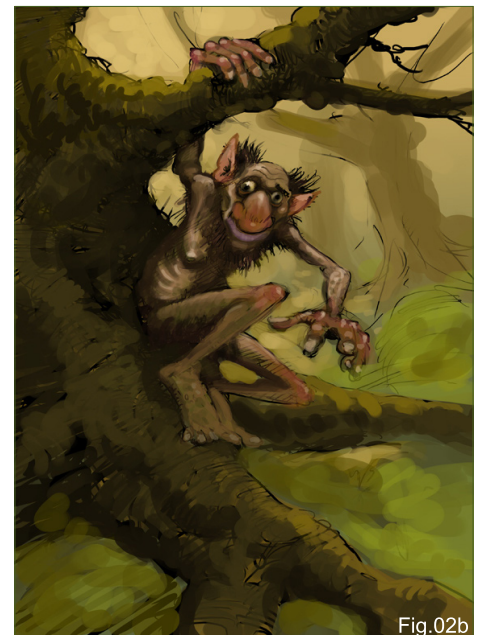


Fig.02b



Fig.03

I added a new layer, setting it to Multiply, and then washed in a few basic earthy brown and green tones. After that I began blocking in some more intense colours, leaving the effect of the troll being almost part of the tree intact. The head and especially the right eye had to be the focal point, and I had an idea that it would be a nice effect if a light beam were to catch the right side of his head – the light shining towards the viewer, reaching his left arm (**Fig.02a & Fig.02b**).

At this still early stage, I thought about giving the piece a moody, early morning forest look.

Lighting is crucial and I had the dark tree from which the troll appears. I thought it would be a nice effect if he was lit by just a few spots coming through the leaves. My problem is that I seldom search for reference material. I know it can be crucial to know how light acts in such a setting, and pictures can help enormously, but being the lazy guy that I am, I just used my imagination (**Fig.03**).

The next step was filling the tree with some textures, such as wood textures and other more grainy textures; I also added different kinds of brushstrokes with brushes I'd once picked up on

the ConceptArt.org forums. I still wasn't satisfied with the position of the arms and legs here, and I began repositioning them on separate layers, transforming them in several ways. Having only the right arm leaning backwards and holding the branch, I felt was okay. In retrospective, however, I think that the arm just needed that bit of attention in the perspective department. Also, the branch and the direction of the fingers didn't match. In **Fig.04** I've shown some of the possibilities I tried. At one point I even considered giving him a weapon.

I guess I have more of an eye for the fun part – the highlighting. By adding light dots on the face, arms and spots on the tree, I felt the mood I was reaching for slowly began to appear. One place on his body, around the chest and ribs, I didn't alter – there was something going on I just liked, kind of a happy accident thing. And of course it was time to fill in some leaves. For that I used different leaf brushes, the standard ones in Photoshop, as well as some I picked up from the Internet. The nice green colours were very complementary with the reds in the troll.



Fig.05

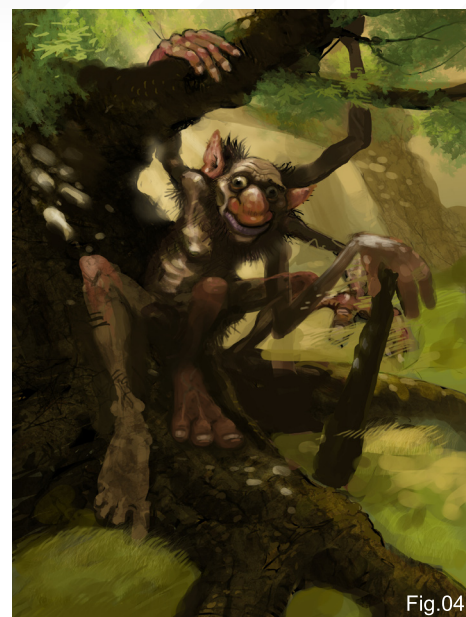


Fig.04

I also repositioned the torso, head and right arm, which became necessary after flipping the canvas and realising there were a few things wrangling.

The next step was the finer detailing of everything, but most of all the head. Whilst lurking on one of the ConceptArt.org forums I found a magnificent drawing of a creature with an open mouth. This made me change the mouth of my own troll, which was actually only a stroke purple. The open mouth gave it more character. I then flattened the image and made some colour adjustments. I copied the layer and made it darker, and then with the Eraser tool set to a soft brush and at a low opacity, I lifted the underlying brighter parts up to highlight the highlights even more. Finally, I added some sunbeams with the Dodge tool, and I was done (**Fig.05**).

Eventually, I was satisfied with the result. And I must say that this Troll round was a lot of fun to do; I enjoyed making my own troll and looking at what the other entrants came up with. Thanks!

Tom van Wanrooy

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2nd Chuck, mate

Software Used: Photoshop

Step 1

I started off with some quick head sketches. Since I was looking for a character design – a stylised character design – it was important for me to first capture some good facial features, something that would say “Troll”, to me. I was happy with the top-right face (**Fig.01**), since it looked shaggy and scary, but still laughable and a bit goofy.

Step 2

In a new Photoshop document, I copied and pasted the chosen head and continued sketching up his body – at first very loosely, just capturing a nice pose and good head/body proportions, then with more attention to detail and a rough tonal shading of limbs (**Fig.02**). Darker tones were used for those features drawing away from the viewer’s eye. I kept the



Fig.01

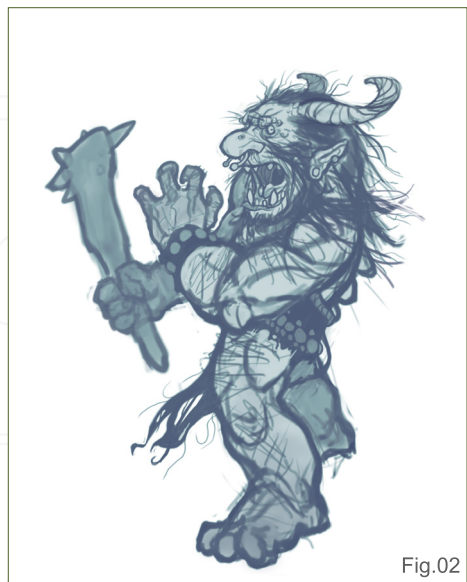


Fig.02



Fig.03



Fig.04b



Fig.04a

head relatively large compared to the torso for that Jim Henson’s Muppets-full-bodysuit look (*Sesame Street*, *The Muppets*, *Fraggle Rock*, etc.), which I’ve always found funny and weird looking (in a good way!).

Step 3

At this stage, I added some environment to the illustration, just so my guy wouldn’t be floating

about in the middle of nowhere. I thought a small cave, rocky and damp, might be a good place for this troll to dwell in (**Fig.03**). I was using cool colours at this rough stage, taking into consideration that the main light source for the entire piece was going to be this guy’s club/bludgeon on fire. So I started off with cool shades that would then build to warmer colours up close to the fiery light source.

Step 4

Here I added plaster, leather and rust textures from my image library; I combined all three into one new texture layer (**Fig.04a**) using varying blending modes (Overlay, Colour, Multiply), and then applied this one texture layer on top of my initial rough sketch using the Multiply blending mode. This added a nice textured foundation for the painting (**Fig.04b**). I then added some quick colour blocking to the main figure and a little to his surroundings. To keep my troll from looking too stiff and plastic-like in terms of colours and shading, I use several shades of greens, oranges and reds for his face and body at this early stage. This allowed me to later pick random colours which were all still relating to one another, thus keeping the colour work consistent, but not flat and lifeless.

Step 5

This was where the fun part began! I started rendering in the shapes and forms, starting with the face, which was where I wanted the main focus of the piece to be. I used colours and shades that were already there and painted in the larger shapes of the face, hand and horns (**Fig.05**).

Step 6

After painting in the facial features and hand, I moved onto painting more detailed work, using smaller and smaller brushes and brighter



Fig.06



shades of the initial colours. I then introduced a very bright orange/yellow colour for the bright light being cast on the troll from the burning torch. When painting the flame, I tried to keep in mind the figure's shapes and curves and how the light source would affect them (**Fig.06**).

Step 7

Continuing to paint in more detail, I defined the troll's arms, legs, horns and hands, using the cave's cool colours from the shaded areas



Fig.07

to further connect the main figure with his background. I painted some finer details here, like the hair, some spots and refined the body's texture. I then increased the contrast (which felt a bit faded and weak at this point) and added more light being cast onto the ground and the surroundings. (**Fig.07**)

Step 8 – Final

This was just the fine-tuning stage where I painted in more of the yellowish light source on the background elements, and painted in (on a Multiply layer) deeper shadows where needed. I also tweaked the shape of the mouth a bit using the Liquify tool, since it didn't sit well for me. As a final touch I filled in a new layer with a warm red colour, turned the layer's blending mode to Overlay, and lowered the opacity of the layer to about 9-10 %. This helped me to unify the whole colour palette and add a bit more necessary contrast to the overall piece (**Fig.08**).

The whole process took about two-three hours to complete – what you might call a speed painting, perhaps? Enjoy!

Patri Balanovsky

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Fig.08

1st Rolox

Software Used: Painter and Photoshop

Introduction

This is my first "making of", so first of all I'm going to introduce myself. My name is Rolando Mallada, and I live in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. I'm essentially a comic artist that enjoys digital art a lot. I hope that you'll enjoy this article and that you may extract something beneficial for yourself from this brief walkthrough.

Looking for the Concept

First of all I got into a fight with some paper,



Fig.01



Fig.02

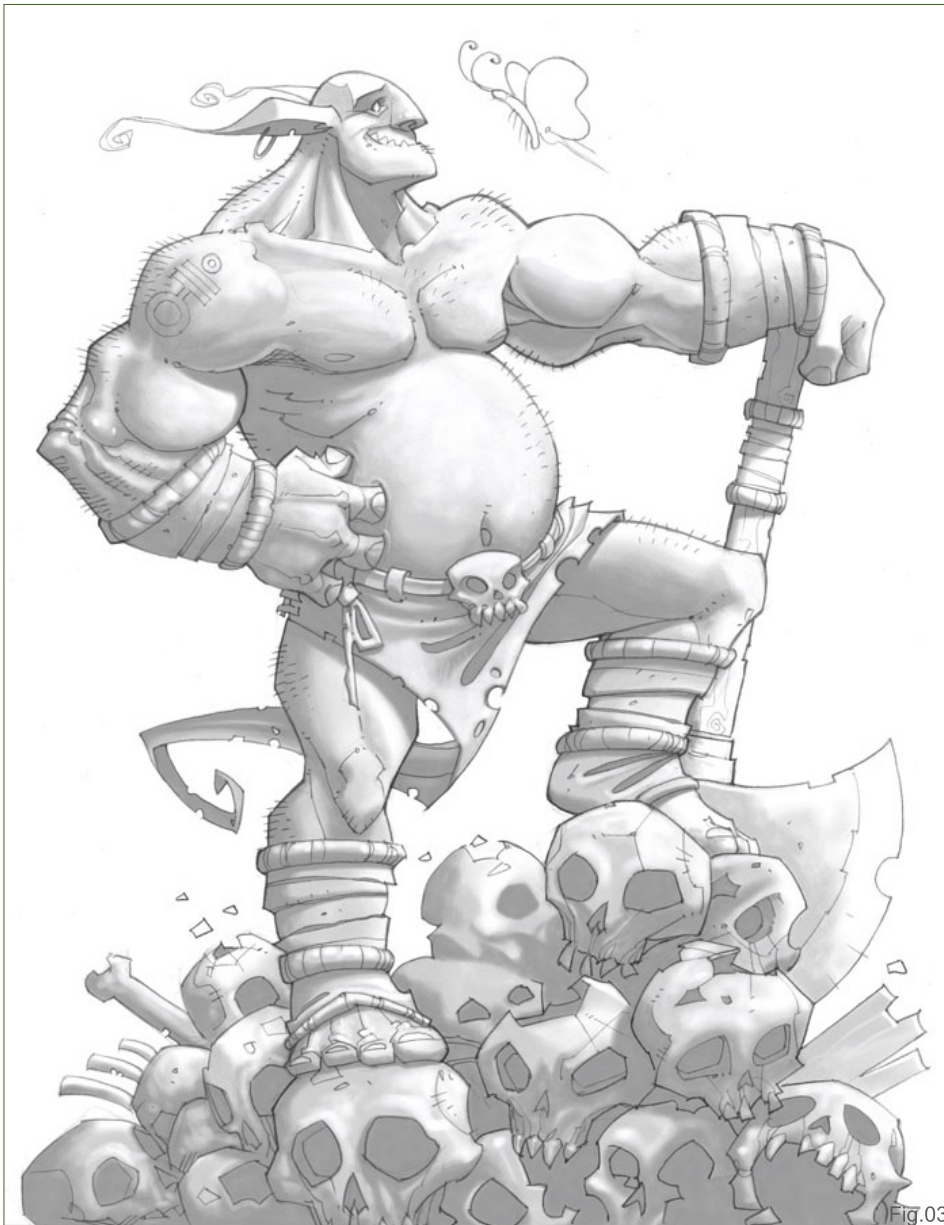


Fig.03

searching for the concept. For me, the most complex part of the process is to give birth to a character – it's not a simple task. The colour is important, for sure, but the figure, the composition and dynamics all comes from the spinal column of any illustration.

When I had everything that had materialized on paper (Fig.01), I proceeded to improve the line drawing to create a clean and polished drawing (Fig.02). I like to work the colour on something clean-cut. I then brought the traditional work to a close here and took the sketch onto the computer.



Fig.04

Lights & Shadows

Something that I like to do before beginning to colour any piece, is to define the lights and shadows. This gives volume to the forms, and for me it makes the task of colouring easier. So in this phase I determined a main light source, and from there I worked in a monochrome mode to cast some shadows and the mid-tones. I added a Hard Light layer and painted the shadows with three tones of grey: 15, 25 and 35% (**Fig.03**). In this layer mode, the grey at 50% was transparent. In general, I did give some colour dye to greys – 10% of ochre saturation. I never paint with the pure greys.

Planes & Layers

I am always accustomed to separating the planes into different layers: 3 planes = 3 layers; foreground, mid-ground, and background. This allows me to work the different elements that



compose the illustration comfortably. This way I can also work the background without altering the character (foreground), or vice-versa.



on the character's tones and the background (**Fig.05**), getting into the brighter tones at the zones with more light exposure.



Before beginning with the colour, I transferred the line art to a Multiply layer and placed it over the three layers/planes.

Base Colours & Background

In this phase I started to colour the piece with basic tones, generally with dark- and mid-tones (**Fig.04**). Here, I also painted a provisional background, which I finished modifying later on.

From my simply colour base, I started to polish and enrich the image little by little, working

I Love the Overlay Layers!

Yes! From here on, I started to use Overlay layers to fix the character's general tones. I gave a sun-tanned tone to the character, as well as some skin spots and a tattoo on the shoulder (**Fig.06**). I also added a layer in Normal mode on top of all the layers; I worked the highlight details and the reflections of the other light sources here.

Next I coloured the skulls, the butterfly, and I intensified the colours still more with Overlay layers (**Fig.07a** & **Fig.07b**).



Final Touches

To finish the illustration, I added more details: blood stains on the legs and the axe, dirt on parts of the body, and I enhanced the light in the butterfly areas.

Usually, to finalize my illustrations I add an Overlay layer with 10% transparency and I refill it with some patterns (concrete, for example). This removes a little of the digital coldness (**Fig.08**).

That's all friends! I hope that you have enjoyed the article. Thanks to all for their support and see you later!

Rolando Mallada

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://rolando-mallada.blogspot.com/>

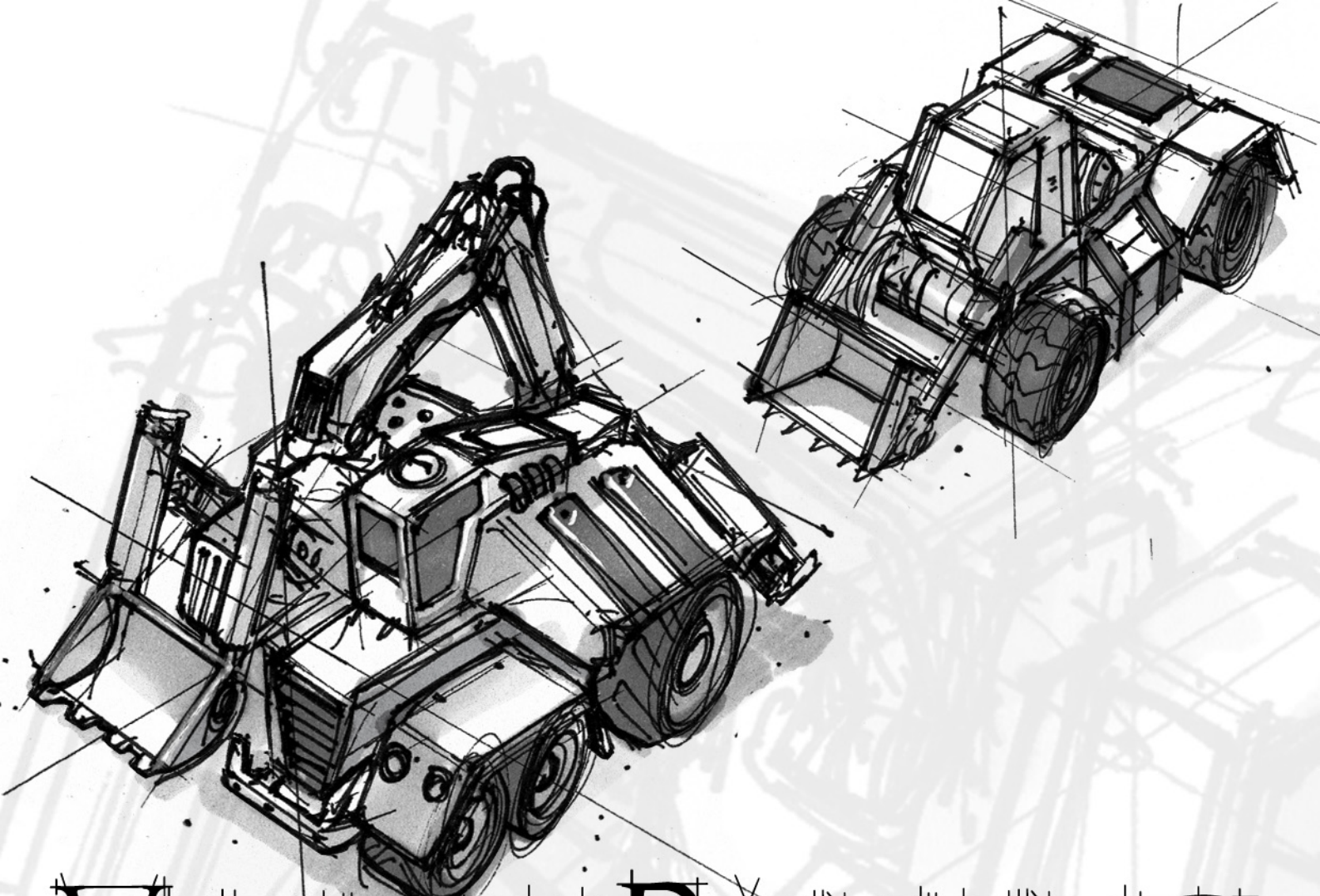
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Fig.08

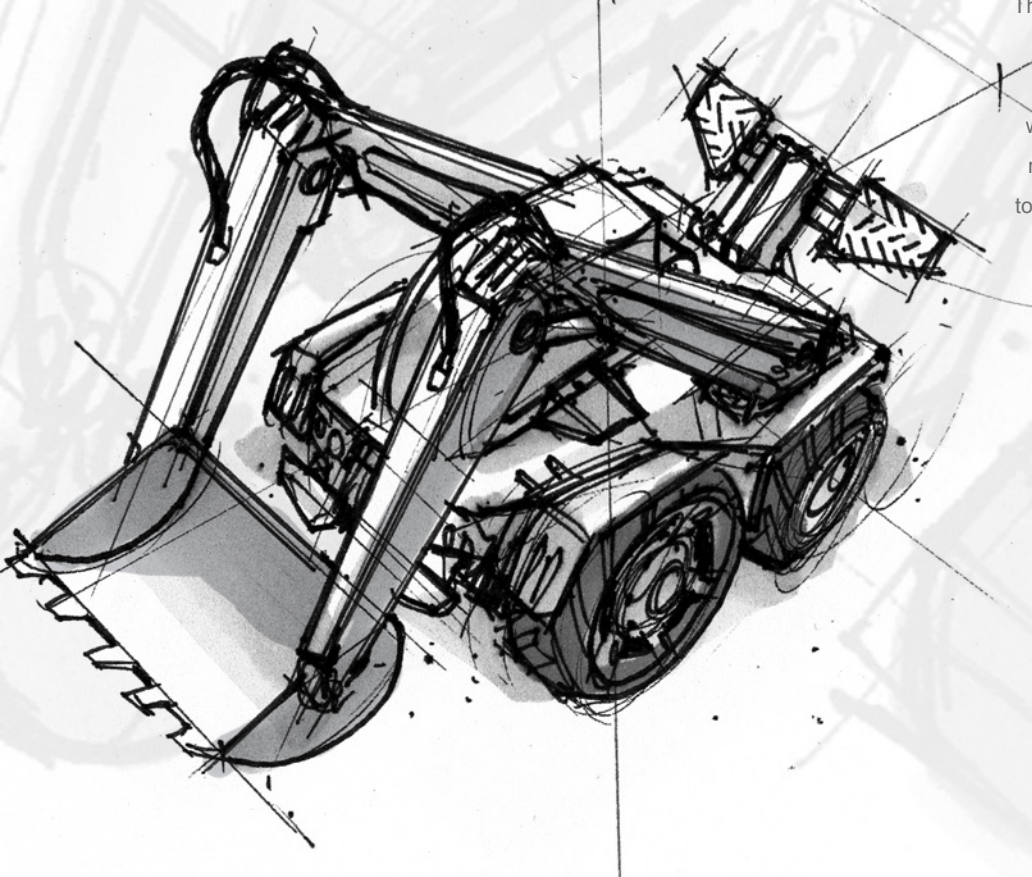


VEHICLE PAINTING

TUTORIAL SERIES

This series will take an in-depth look into the process of designing vehicles, beginning with the concept stage and following through to a final design. We will cover sketching approaches used to evolve and refine an initial idea, and show the techniques used to produce a number of drawings, exploring a variety of designs.

The tutorial will then move onto creating a finished design and placing the vehicle in a simple scene and addressing the issue of rendering the various materials that make up its construction. The importance of perspective will be explained before concluding with a chapter on adding design details and lighting effects.



PART 1 – **Issue 038** Feb 2009

PART 2 – **Issue 039** Mar 2009

PART 3 – **Issue 040** Apr 2009

PART 4 – **Issue 040** May 2009

PART 5 – **Issue 040** Jun 2009

VEHICLE PAINTING

PART 2 - REFINING THE CONCEPT

Created In:

Painter

Introduction

Welcome back to the second part of the Vehicle Painting Tutorial Series – this month I'll be refining my concept.

Getting Started

Okay, so I went through and picked out the rough sketches that I felt had some good potential. This next stage is more of a thinking stage and figuring out what makes your rough ideation look good; what the design and proportions look like. So I take my roughs, which give me a decent idea of what the car might look like, and I start to sketch over them. This is one stage that can be a lot faster if you are working digitally.

In my drawings, I cut stuff out and move them and scale them to get different proportions and

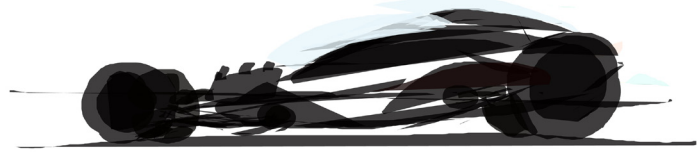


Fig.01



Fig.02



Fig.03

such. The following three final designs were sketched in the same way, using Painter 11 in which I made a non photo blue pencil.

So in the first phase I take the ideation sketch and fade back the layer so it is lighter and gives a good underlay (**Fig.01**). This way I can see my new line sketch as I lay it down.

I decide that the engine is too far forward and I want to make the car look longer, so I cut the engine out and move into a position where I think it looks better (**Fig.02**). I then start laying down some line work to start cleaning up the design (**Fig.03**).

I really figure that the engine will be a showcase piece on this vehicle – after all, the bigger the engine, the faster it looks! So I go to my reference stash from all the previous hot rod shows I have attended (**Fig.04 – 05**), and pull up some engine references. Using references, I feel, is very important; it helps you put in details you might not have thought of you were drawing entirely from your mind – especially if you've never drawn it before.

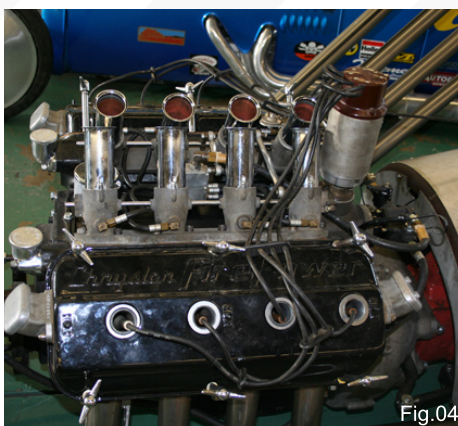


Fig.04

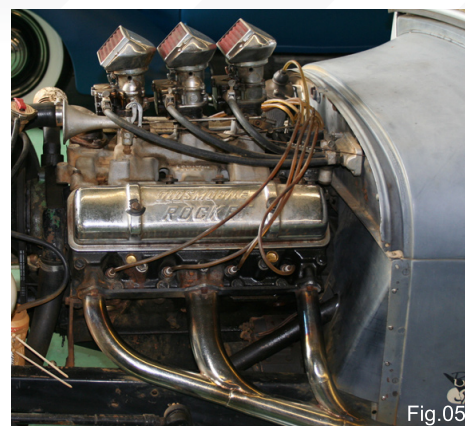


Fig.05

I don't stick to the exact design and I add some modern features to the engine, as if it could be in the future or an alternate dimension (**Fig.06**). I also love things with lots of mechanical detail; it gives a sense of being engineered and it could function if it had to. You may also notice I made the engine big, but I later shoved it back into the body more to really kick the wheels out in front! I tighten up my wheels with some ellipse guides (**Fig.07**). One thing that I do manually is use my ellipse templates on my Wacom 21 UX. It takes too long to draw up a circle and stroke the path, so I just put my ellipse templates right on my monitor and draw as if I was using regular paper. This saves some time. I also added a small grill to the front to keep the engine cool. I know it still has the hot rod feel – what can I say? I love hot rods!

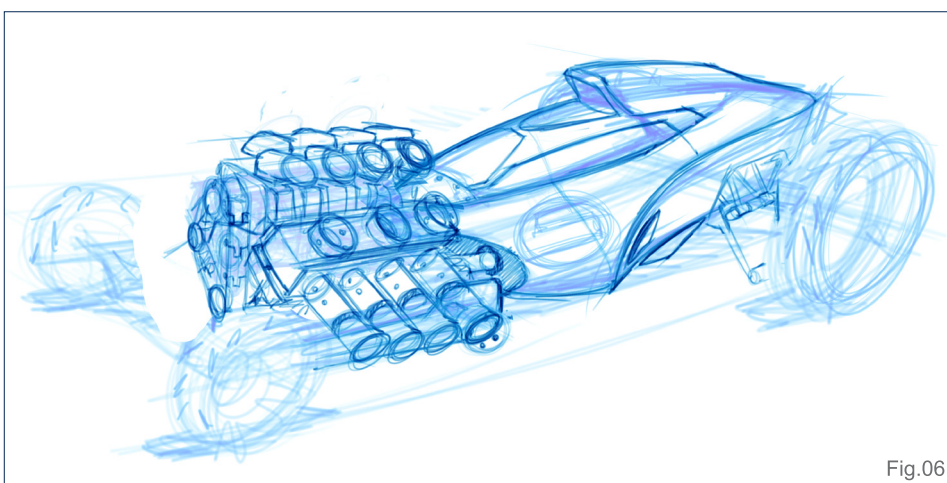


Fig.06

In this last phase I add a ground shadow to place it on the ground (**Fig.08**). When you add a simple shadow, it really helps make the object you just drew feel like a solid mass – even when you draw a spaceship hovering over the ground,

you can place a shadow under the ship. Not only does it give mass to the object but it also helps you determine the top view of the object. I then went around and added a few shadows to darker areas to give detail and to give mass.

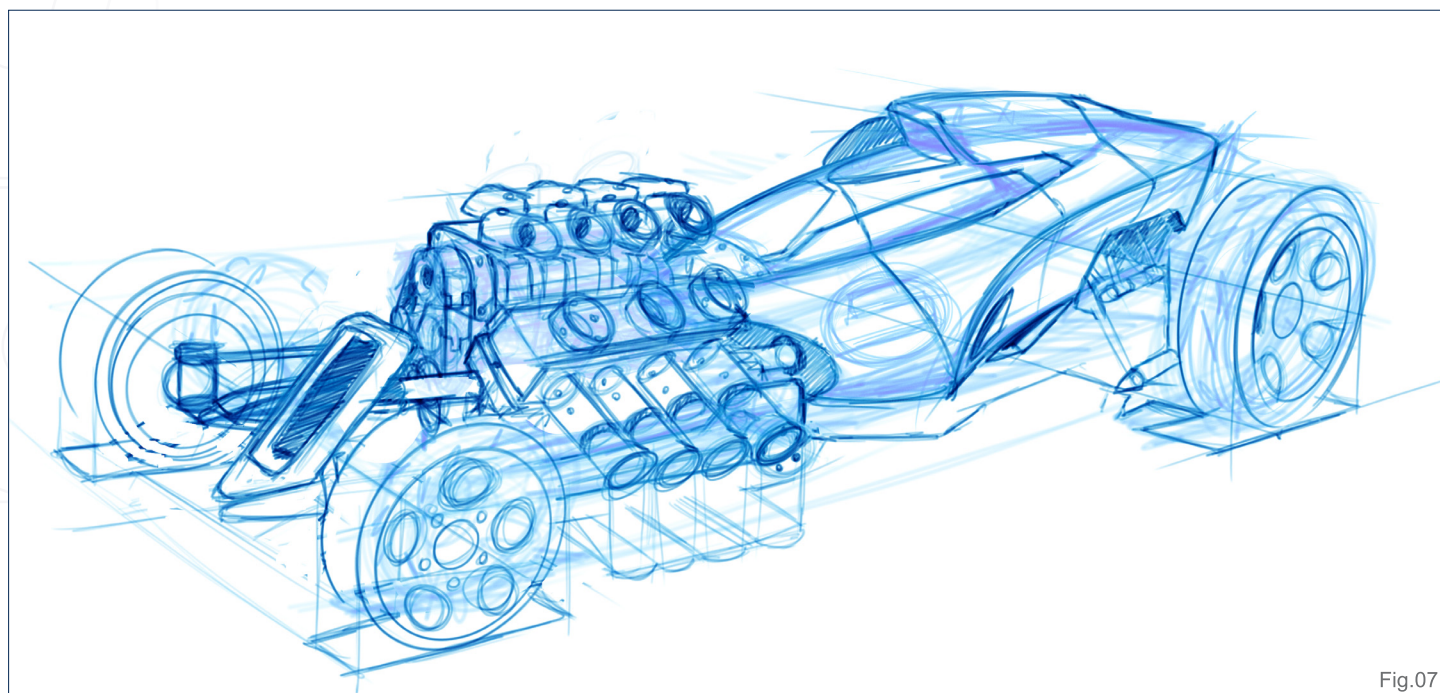


Fig.07

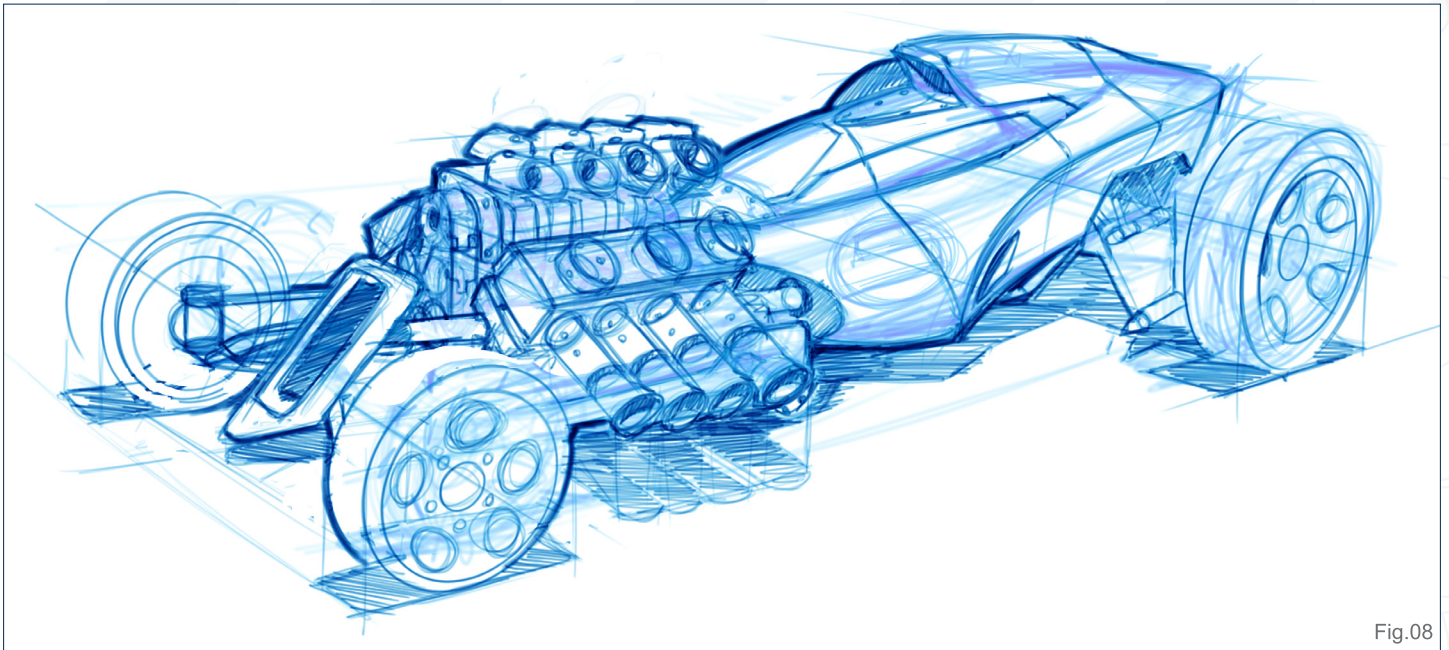


Fig.08

The following sketches were also done in the same way (Fig.09 – 10).

As you can see, my final concept (see Fig.08) is still not a really tight drawing, but is much closer to a finished piece now. This phase is probably the hardest phase because you are figuring out the design and how things look with each other. This comes with practice and observing things in life, and then figuring out how you can manipulate that to look futuristic – or whatever the design brief may ask for. In the next phase I will throw some greys down to help determine

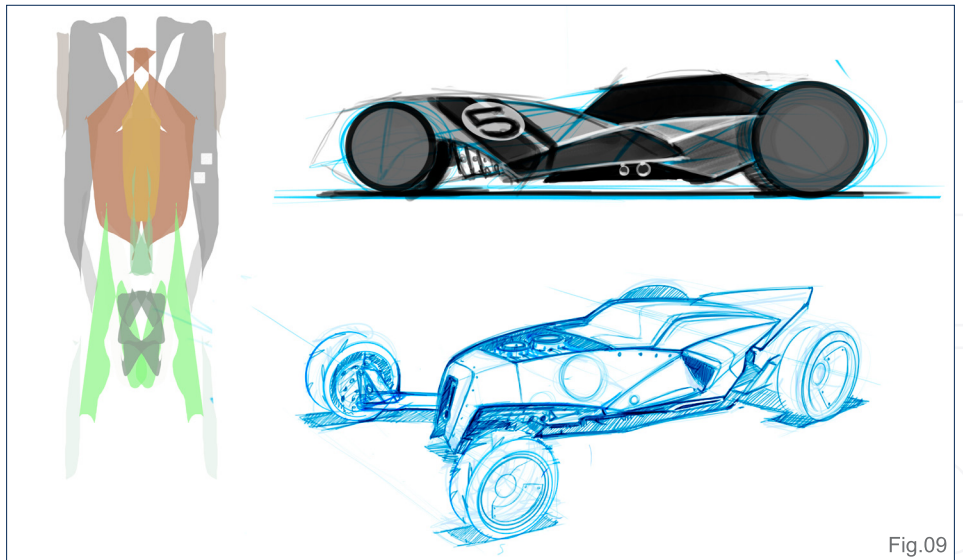


Fig.09

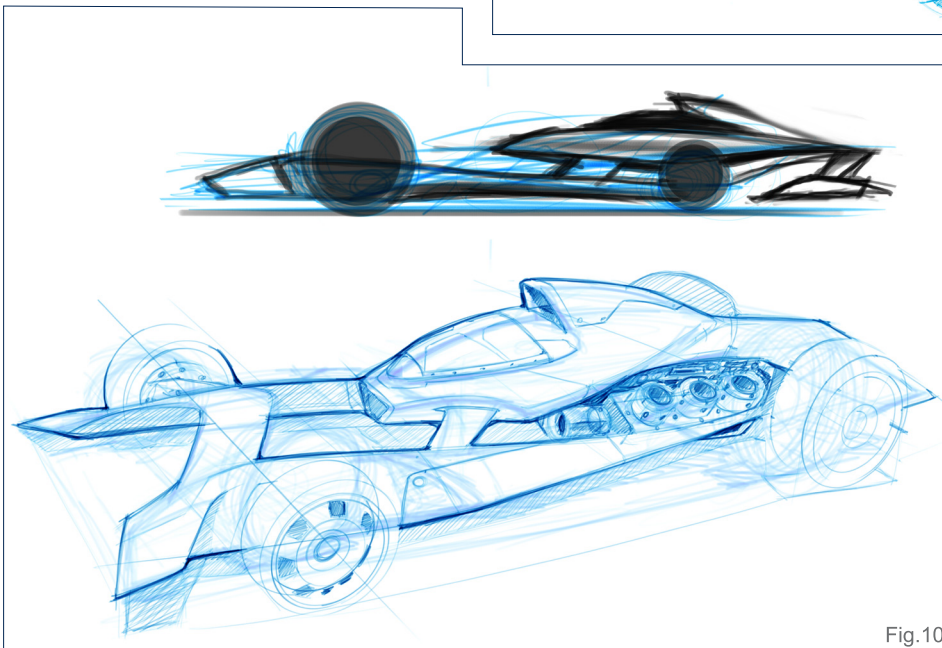


Fig.10

form, and figure out certain shapes. I'll then move into color and put the vehicle in a scene.

Note from the Editor: Next month, Hoi Mun Tham will be back refining the concept of his mechanical excavation digger-type vehicle design, so stay tuned!

Dwayne Vance

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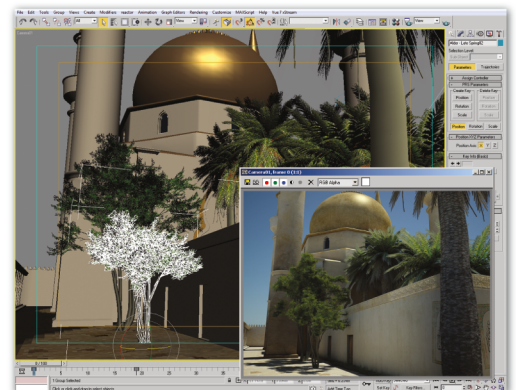
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SPEED PAINTING

Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. This month we've asked two artists to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes.

This month our talented artists, [Levente Peterffy](#) and [Jesse van Dijk](#), tackle the topic:

*They looked through the window
and what they saw took their breath away*

Levente Peterffy

Created In:

Adobe Photoshop

Introduction

For this month's issue, the theme is: "They looked through the window and what they saw took their breath away". With this in mind I want to create an image where we, as an observer, are watching with the characters – looking out through the window. I want us to see something extraordinary, and for this kind of concept we're going to require a strong sense of composition. I would therefore like this article to focus more on the composition, rather than the technical brush aspects and colours.

There are a couple of rules that can be applied to achieve good composition:

Rule of thirds

Golden section rule

Diagonal rule

Personally, I don't like to think of rules too much because they tend to keep you thinking in a strict process and can also limit your own thinking. But it's still important – and also good – to be aware of these rules. There is also a good reason to try and break these rules, because they are very easily recognisable and hence can make an image appear dull. But it's pretty easy to research about all of these rules – plus



Fig.01



Fig.02

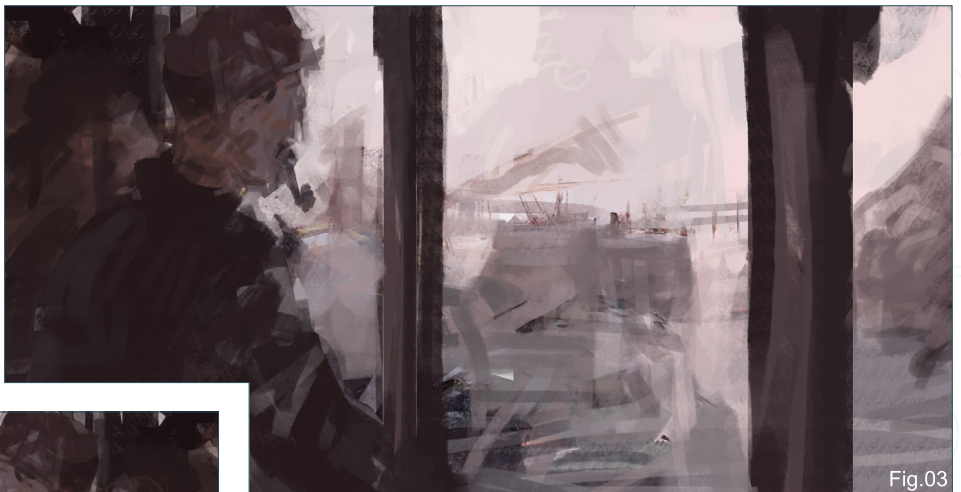


Fig.03

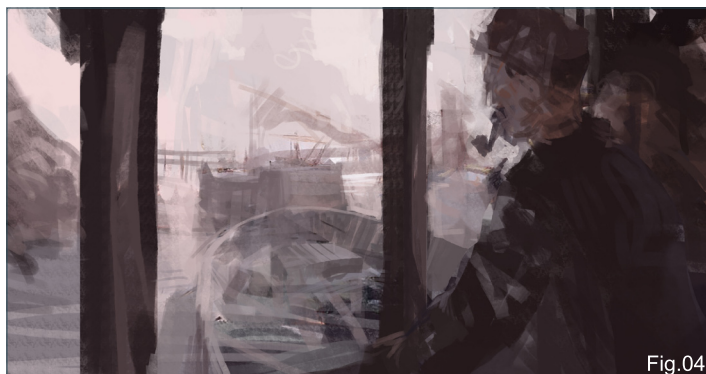


Fig.04

I'm sure many of you are familiar with them already, so I will leave you to make your own research about these as you feel necessary.

Blocking & Placement

Let's take a look at the very first image of this tutorial (**Fig.01**). We can see a figure slightly left of the centre; I've intentionally left the centre open because this is our "window" looking out at our scene. This window area

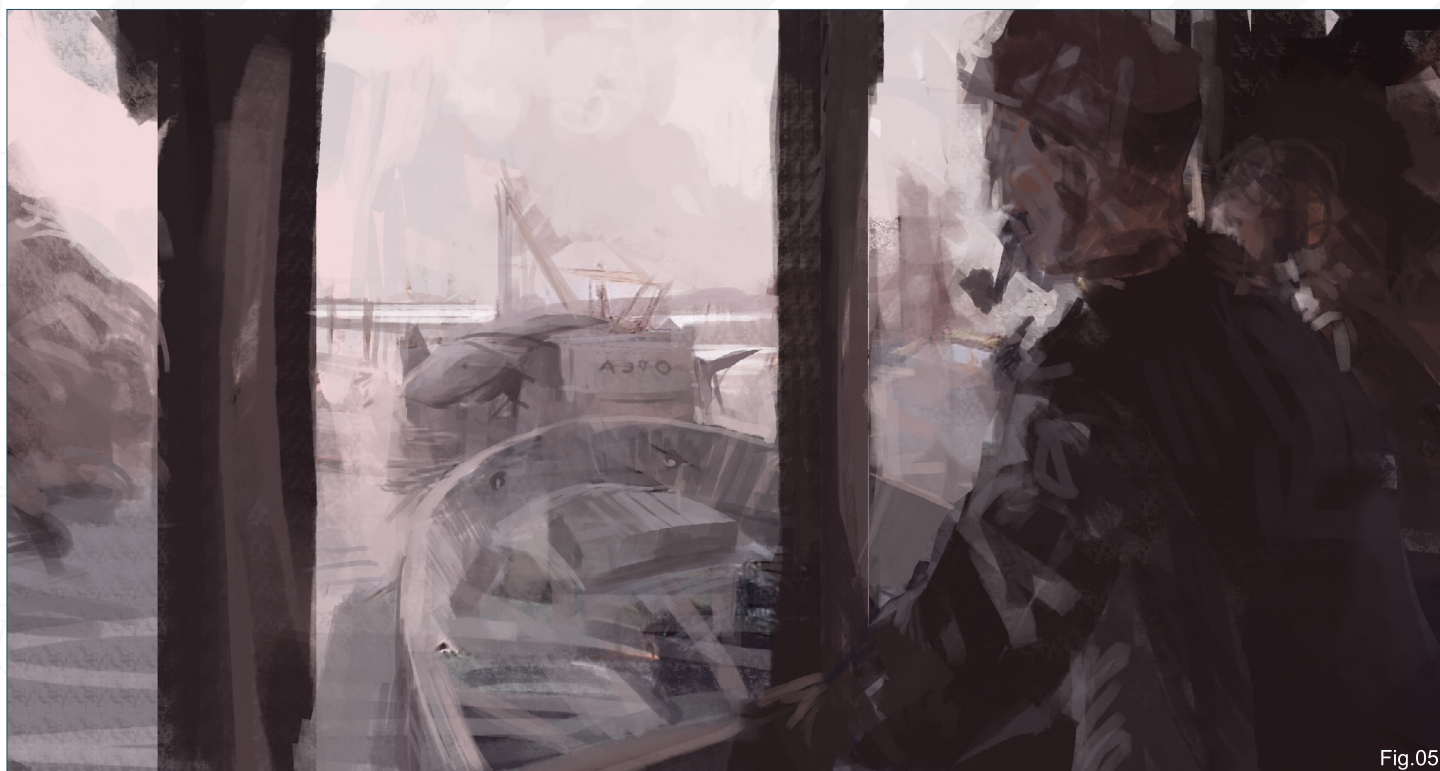


Fig.05

is where the focus of the eye should be led. We will become one of the party of characters that are looking out of the window, making us the “they” in this particular speed painting theme.

So as not to not disturb the central focus we must think of the surrounding area as interesting, but not to the degree that it’s

distracting in any way. Therefore, painting in the periphery can’t have extreme values of colour or contrasting and strong shapes.

Finishing the Block Out

A few more steps into the painting now, we can take a look at the next tutorial image (Fig.02).

Here I have filled the canvas where we have

full focus from our point of view, and at the same time have objects around it giving it visual weight, but not extracting us from this view. We also have more definition to the shapes. The objects now read as the shapes of humans, boats, water, hill, sky and so on. Notice also that we are not exactly looking in the centre but slightly to the right of it.

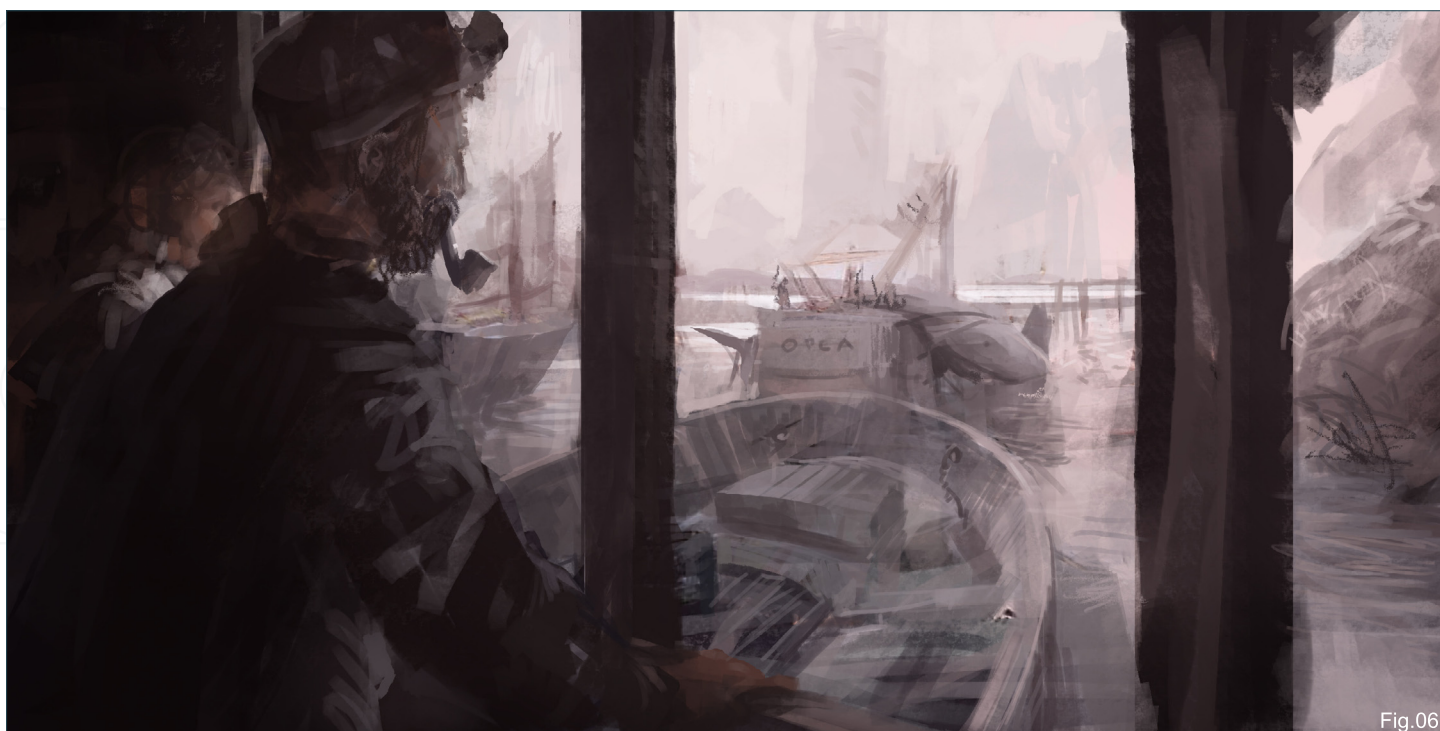


Fig.06

As we continue (**Fig.03 & Fig.04**) the shapes become clearer, sharper, more defined and also stay in the same colour palette. Remember to flip your canvas to check the composition is working well. Soon we will be able to see what's so extraordinary outside that window!

Enhancing the Focus

You can paint so that the eye follows a certain path to a strong visual point, but enhancing this point further can be achieved through the subject. And since I really love the *Jaws* movie, I decided in this painting to put the strongest focus onto a huge shark, painting it slightly smaller than the fishing boat.

"That's a 20-footer!"

"25-footer, 3 tonnes of him..."

Painting the Rest

Since the composition is set and there are no more introductions of new objects, the rest is about enhancing definition in the detail and colour (**Fig.05 - Fig.09**). Be careful not to paint to the level that it will distract – the smaller person in the image is close to that extent, but it lacks definition in shape making it more blurred and diffused.



Fig.07



Fig.08



Fig.09

Levente Peterffy

For more from this artist visit:

<http://www.leventep.com>

Or contact:

lp@leventep.com

Jesse van Dijk

Created In:

Adobe Photoshop

Working from topics is cool, because it usually forces you to think about the image before you actually start painting.

Idea generation

Upon reading the topic, the first thing that comes to mind is sprawling landscapes, perhaps seen from a (flying) vehicle, or super-high, mega-structure. However, I've got time to spare, so I allow myself to ponder over other possibilities for a few days. I'm usually sceptical of my very first idea - often, it's also the most generic.

Recently I've done a series of really quick sketches of some typically Dutch environments: very flat, mostly agricultural, nothing very dramatic outside of the overwhelming flatness of the land. I decide to use this as a context for my "out of the window" piece as well, as it will force me to think a little bit further than my very first idea. Taking an existing context for something I need to design is a technique I often apply as it will save me design time. My "Dutch" sketch can be seen in **Fig.01/**

To kick off the painting, I start sketching a very generic farmyard, and I decide I'll have people



Fig.01



Fig.02

behind the windows of the farm to take care of the "they looked out the window" bit of the topic. This means I'll have to create a scene outside of the farmhouse that will "take the breath away" of the people inside. There's a real obvious solution for this problem of course: I'll have an invasion of huge, alien monsters harass the

cows of the farm, giving the people inside an ominous feeling of "we're next" (**Fig.02**). However, it shouldn't be a thoroughly nasty scene, as I wouldn't want to suggest just plain cruelty against animals. I'm aiming for something a little more light-hearted. While this is a very, very rough sketch, it allows me to judge the composition, basic lighting setup and camera angle. Seems like we're okay for the moment.

Making the painting work

A lot of the depth of this image is going to be achieved by fogging and atmospheric perspective (the gradual decrease in contrast as subjects move further away from camera). Because of this, and the relatively simple lighting scenario, I can introduce colour into the image at a fairly early stage. There's really

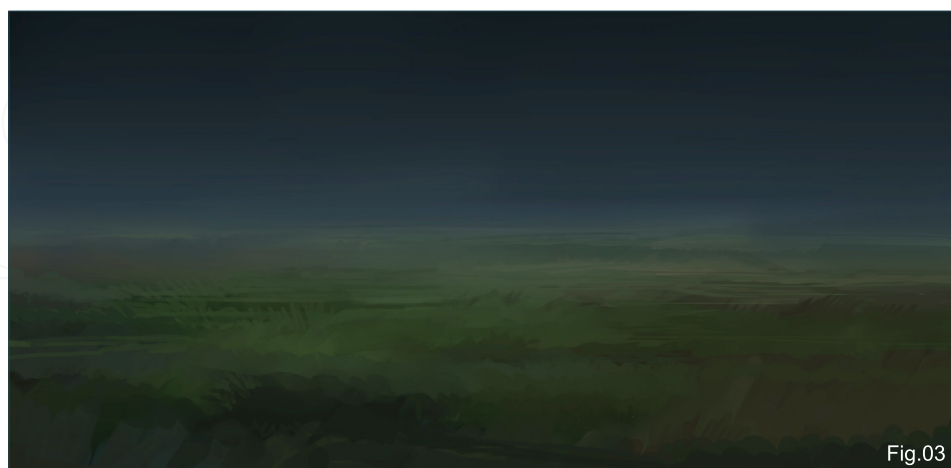


Fig.03

no point in drawing another grassy plain other than the one I've just completed earlier in another one of those Dutch landscape sketches I mentioned, so I simply copy/paste the ground from my existing sketch and add a bit of blue night atmosphere (for such occasions, Multiply layers are your friends) (**Fig.03**).

I can get away with this as the original sketch was in daylight, and my out-of-the-window sketch is a night scene. Additionally, I also scale down the copied content vertically and non-uniformly. No one will be able to tell the similarities between my original sketch and my new one. Having the ground in there, with many subtle hue differences, will still allow me to mess around with the colours and lightness of the scene quite roughly. Anyway, back to the sketch. I apply a fairly straightforward local colour scheme: green-ish for the grass, blue-ish in the night sky, and primarily dark grey for the aliens (**Fig.04**).

Next up is tidying up the background. I want to focus the viewer's attention primarily on the creatures, so I can't afford to spend too much time on everything else. I'm keeping the



Fig.04



Fig.05



Fig.06



Fig.07

creatures on a separate layer for the time being, and turn it off. My basic background is clear enough for now (**Fig.05**).

Now I've got to worry about the main aspect of the painting, the creatures themselves. What's a bit tricky about this is that I've got to design and visualise them in the composition at the same time. It's supposed to be speed painting after all, there really isn't time to do any further design studies. So to be able to tackle this problem, I save a new version of the image, desaturate everything, and start working on the creatures on a new layer. I will import this layer in my colour image later on and put in Luminosity blending mode to make up for the lack of colour information. But that's all for later. First I need to



Fig.08

better define these creatures. Working in black and white is a little easier to design in, as you don't need to worry about colours (**Fig.06**).

What's important is that I want to keep the viewer guessing at what he is really looking at. Are they mechanical? Organic? Or perhaps a combination of both? They need to be alien to us, so I'm not answering all the questions.

Also, this is a good a moment to paint some more cows. The position and attitude of the cows is important for the story. I want them to look uninterested mostly; this will take away the notion that the creature will simply tear them to shreds, which I want to avoid. If the cows are okay with such a crazy monster stomping through their farmland, then perhaps it's not such an evil creature after all? So, some of

the cows just continue munching grass (which is unlikely at night, but I'll take a bit of artistic liberty here to emphasise their disinterest), while the others can't even be bothered to look at the thing. Only the cow in the spotlight actually looks up to see what all the light is about (**Fig.07**).

Okay, now I've got one big creature looking over the farmhouse itself, while the one close to camera is concentrating on the cow (**Fig.08**).



Fig.09

Now let's see how well they fit into the coloured background I did earlier. I drag my b/w creatures into my coloured PSD, and put them in Luminosity mode, Copy Merge the result, and Dodge here and there to underline some of the bright lights. I also add a few lights in the background to suggest it's a whole army of these creatures that's suddenly landed on Earth (**Fig.09**).

Right. I'm not happy. Something is wrong, but at first I really can't tell what it is. I let the picture rest for a bit; I'll get back to it later. So much for this being a speed painting!

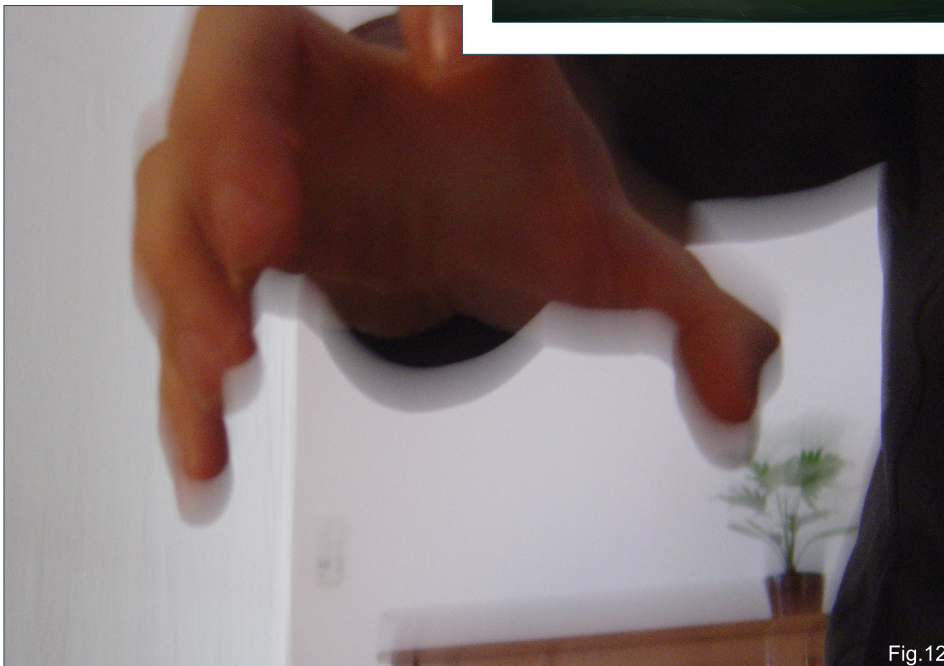
Kill your darlings

Looking at it the next day, I instantly see what I felt bad about: it's the fact that the painting consists of two essentially unconnected scenes. There is one creature bothering the house, the other bothering the cow. Or to explain it visually, there are two separate visual loops, as shown in **Fig.10**.

These two scenes could perfectly well be two separate images and since they are in one painting, that's a problem. I want to send a clear signal to the viewer, not a confusing mess of two different stories. At this point, no matter how painful it is, it's time to kill my darlings - remember that "less is more", etc. I remove the foreground creature altogether and see how that works (**Fig.11**).

That's a much stronger composition. It does affect the background story - it's no longer a horde, but a single titanic alien, but since there is no hard brief I will choose a stronger composition over my original idea of an army of these creatures.

Having fixed the composition, all major worries have now been taken care of. From this point on, it's all a matter of detailing, and making sure



no detail is present where it's not needed (which I find a lot harder than adding detail).

The hand gesture is a very important aspect of the painting, so I want some reference for that. It needs to express anticipation on the part of the creature, a bit of menace, but not sheer bloodlust - I need something that also has a bit of curiosity about it. I take a few pictures (my aim is horrible, as **Fig.12** shows) and of the several gestures I make it's no surprise the one I like best is the most crappy, blurred photograph of the lot. However, the fact that it's a bad photo doesn't really matter, as it was never meant as a literal reference. I like how four fingers are all silhouetted against the sky, so I decide to leave



Fig.13

the fifth finger out - hey, it's an alien after all! Time to increase the lighting consistency: warm from the farmhouse, cold from the world and blue greenish from the eyes. I'm flipping the canvas constantly to look at the painting with fresh eyes (Fig.13).

an almost cartoony degree (I'll turn that down just a notch for the final image). To further underline the cows' lack of excitement, I add half a cow on the right edge of the image. This particular cow can't even be bothered to show its face (Fig.14).

people just slightly. Now for the very last (and important step): some colour dodging (if you use Photoshop) or Glowing (if you use Painter) to make sure all the action happens in the mid tones, and not in the shadows. That's it! (Fig.15).

Almost there. I add the people behind the window, and exaggerate their body language to

Time to finish it off. I add shadows and light to the fence, and change the position of the

I hope you've enjoyed the tutorial; visit my website for more of my works and tutorials!



Fig.14

Jesse van Dijk

For more from this artist visit:

<http://jessevandijk.net>

Or contact:

jesse@jessevandijk.net





Fig.15



Matchmoving and Stabilization



"Holy cow! I really love the new UI stuff."

"You've got a great product at an incredible price."

"You've got a great product at an incredible price."

"Whatever happened to 'get a cup of coffee while the tracker is solving'?"

"Saved my life!"

Fixing Shaky Shots
Virtual Set Extensions
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Product Placement in Post-Production
Face & Body Motion Capture
Talking Animals

"The software is amazing"

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The background of the entire page is a detailed illustration of a futuristic spaceship, possibly a Star Destroyer, docked in a large, industrial hangar. The hangar has a high ceiling with structural beams and lights. In the foreground, the silhouette of a person in a pilot's uniform, wearing a cap, is seen from behind, looking out over the ship. The overall color palette is dominated by warm, golden-brown and greenish-yellow tones, with some blue highlights on the ship's hull.

SPACE PAINTING

I - PLANETS AND STAR FIELDS

- PART 1: STARS + NEBULAS - JULY 2008
- PART 2: BARREN WORLDS - AUGUST 2008
- PART 3: BARREN PLANETS - SEPTEMBER 2008
- PART 4: GAIAN PLANETS - OCTOBER 2008
- PART 5: COLONISED PLANETS - NOVEMBER 2008

II - TRANSPORT

- PART 6: SPACESHIPS - DECEMBER 2008
- PART 7: CAPITAL SHIPS - JANUARY 2009
- PART 8: SPACE STATIONS - FEBRUARY 2009

III - ENVIRONMENTS

- PART 9: SCI-FI HANGAR - MARCH 2009
- PART 10: SPACE BATTLE - APRIL 2009
- PART 11: MINING THE ASTEROID FIELDS - MAY 2009
- PART 12: SPACE COLONIES - JUNE 2009

SPACE PAINTING

ENVIRONMENTS: PART 9: SCI-FI HANGAR

Created In: Photoshop

Introduction

Welcome back to the sci-fi and space painting series here in 2DArtist magazine. In this ninth chapter of the series, we'll be exploring sci-fi hangars.

A hangar represents a unique set design in the production of any sci-fi genre blockbuster film, or interior set design for games. Namely, it has to achieve a few functional qualities, offset by providing a relatively bland backdrop. As such, let's first of all explore and discuss the methods used in production for this purpose.

In production, the focus should primarily be efficient and effective methods of

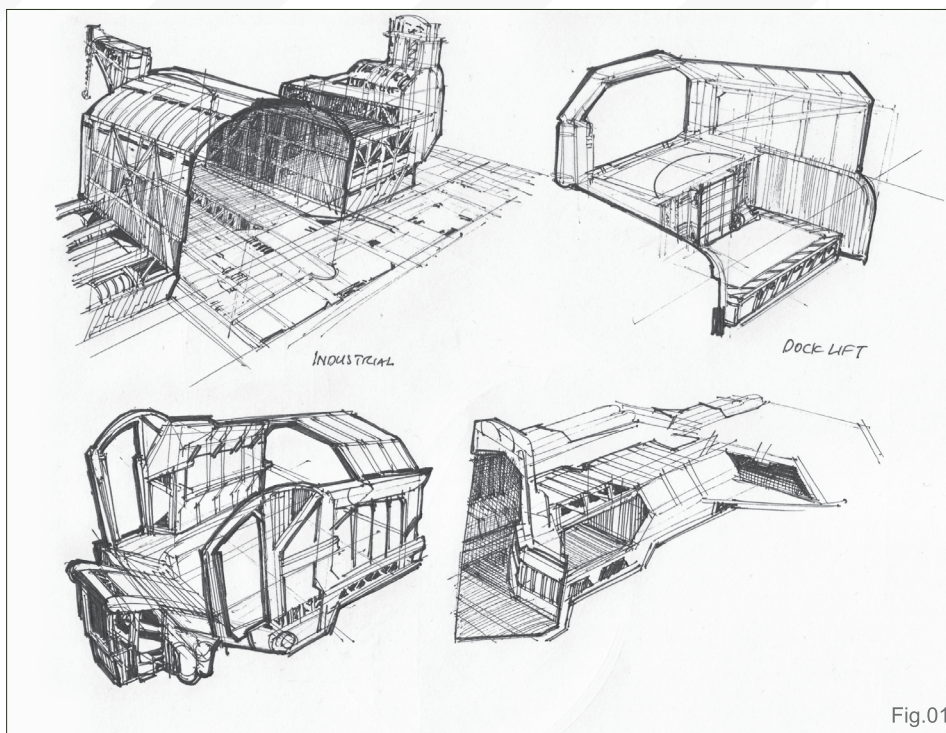


Fig.01

communication in the generation of ideas. Time is often not a luxury, with turnarounds generally occurring within a day or two.

For example, an ideal workflow for a single asset could involve:

- **Day 1** – Thumbnail and idea generation

- **Day 2** – Based on the approved idea, you may be given half a day to explore the asset further or to flesh the design in additional detail. If lucky, your design is really taking off now and will be heartily approved. You'll start a basic colour and mood pass

- **Day 3** – You may spend the day bringing your idea to completion. Often, you will be asked to start work on other art assets and, as such, time management is the key

So let's first examine the practical and safety issues required with the commissioning of a typical military/commercial-type hangar installation, and extrapolate from there.

Overview

To begin, let's consider the establishment of a new base of operations for a commercial port/airbase, or military airbase. All of these installations would require or benefit from a systematic systems analysis of the various strategic, commercial, defensive and operational considerations of establishing a new base of operation. As just a basic overview, the following would be the various aspects to consider if one were to commission and build a new base.

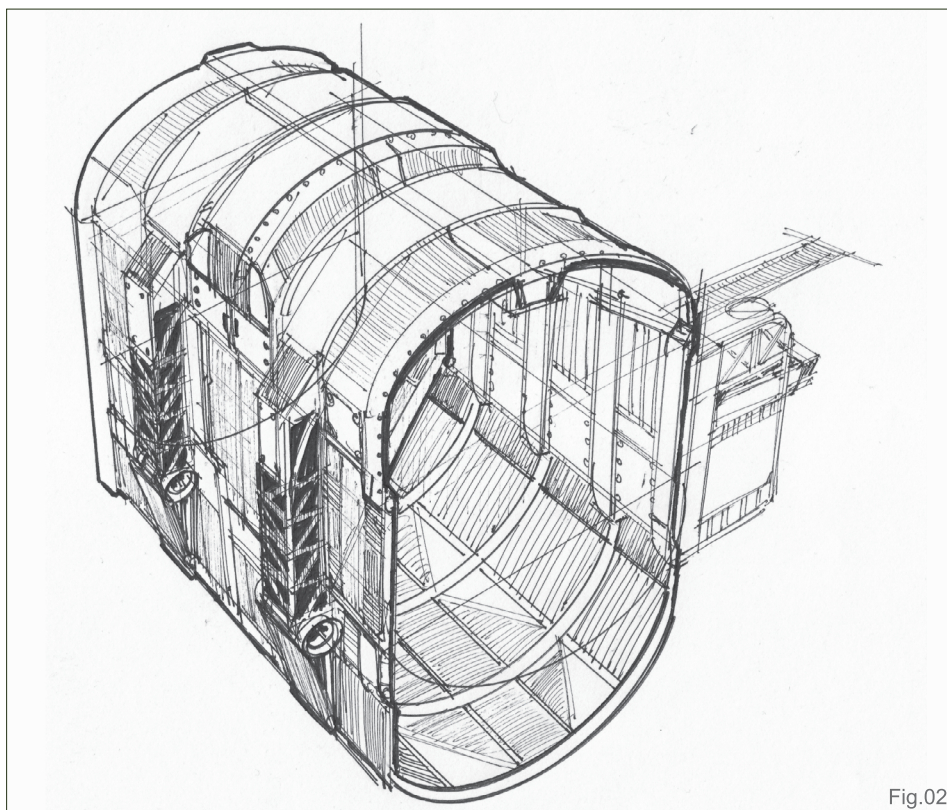


Fig.02

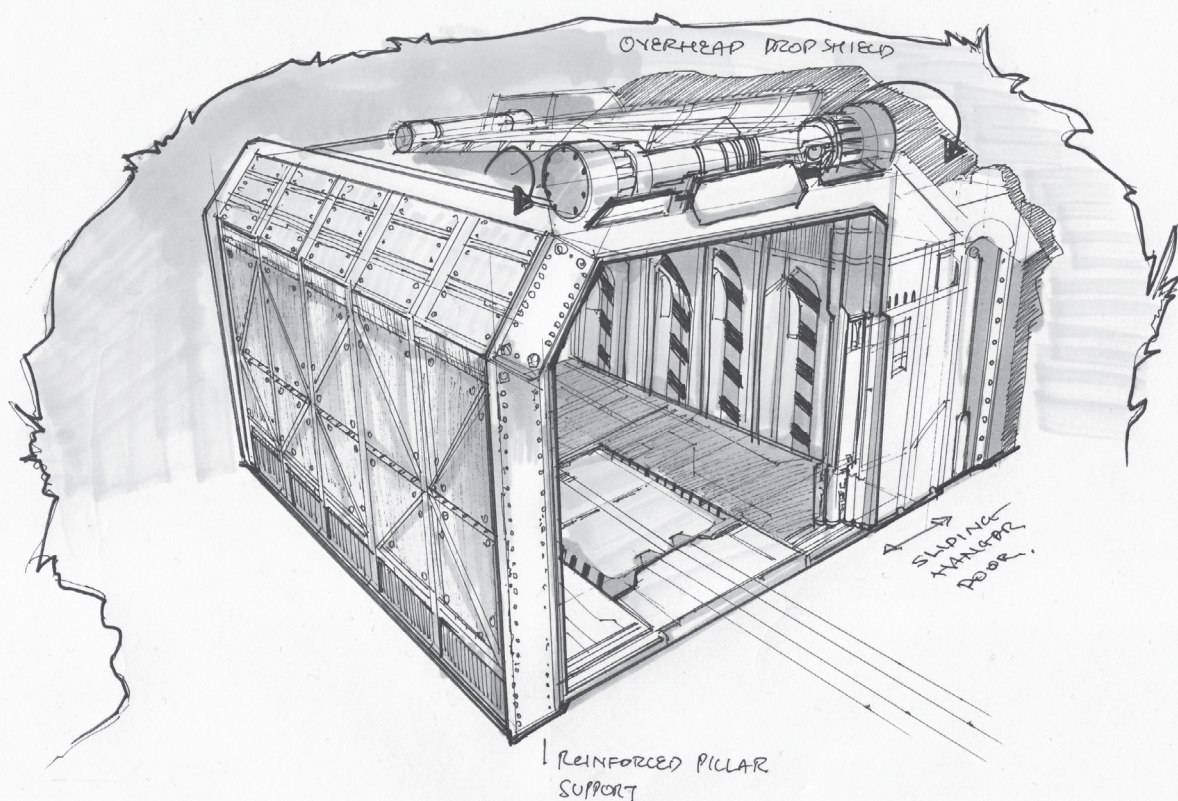


Fig.03

Fire & Safety Features:

- Fire safety clearance
- Fire protection – foam & sprinkler systems:
 - Electrical
 - Fuel/explosion
 - Static
- External durability
- Internal rigidity

Defensive Features:

- Concealment
- Armoured and structural integrity
- Security

Base Cost:

- Strategic location
- Upkeep
- Cost of building installation
- Cost of refurbishing/extending existing base of operation
- Logistics
 - Fuel, resupply and storage
 - Personnel training and efficiency
 - Augmentation of personnel
 - Costs of operating in special/ extreme weather conditions, e.g. arctic,

underwater, underground, zero gravity, etc.

- Critical operational distance
- Political considerations
- Overseas/offshore bases
- Duration of base operations
- Maintenance and repair facilities

Thankfully, for the entertainment industry, the aspects of believable functionality and relative authenticity are the key issues when working the above into a production set.

1: Set Design Production

Hangars are primarily built for aerospace transport, and serve to provide some rudimentary protection compared to exposure to the four elements. Early 19th Century hangars were from adapted woodshed, cattle pens and were of a makeshift nature. In fact, the earliest hangar producer, REIDsteel was established in 1919 following the landing of the famous French aviator, Louis Blériot (who was the first to fly the English Channel) when he landed his monoplane and stored it within a cattle pen. Subsequently, he ordered three new hangars

from REIDsteel and they have been in the aircraft hangar business ever since, producing hangars for all sorts of commercial, business and military purposes.

In **Fig.01** we're looking at a variety of possible hangar designs that may be suitable for a futuristic hangar set. The main thing to note is that there is limited variation of how tall, wide or shaped a hangar can be, due mainly to practical issues such as wind force and natural weather issues, or the simple fact that a variation of a rectangular box involves having primarily either a taller A-shaped frame or semicircular roof, or various shapes in-between the two.

The industrial semicircular hangar design (**Fig.01** - top left) is quite reminiscent of existing hangar designs; due to simplicity and ideal characteristics of its shape and construction, these simple hangar designs would be seen to persist in the future.

The futuristic design (**Fig.01** - bottom right) hangar is envisioned to be built of sturdy reinforced materials. To translate these as a

sci-fi design, often the main choice involves the incorporation of a semi-octagonal-to-hexagonal-and-angular type frame.

For military purposes, hardened hangar designs are incorporated. These can range from steel clad hangars with local environmental factors, such as high winds, local rain and weather, incorporated into the commission. Towards the opposite extreme, reinforced concrete and additional protective measures (e.g. camouflage, building into local geology, etc.) are factored into a commission when these are built.

In **Fig.02**, the industrial shaped design from **Fig.01** is taken one step further, to perhaps serve as a multi-purpose hangar/dock for future spacecraft that can land on both water and in the air. The natural buoyancy afforded by water-based structures can often be appealing from the matter of an underwater concealed base. To serve both a dock/hangar and dry dock function, the additional vertical depth is considered and allows for versatile functionality for a variety of transport. This leads towards a simple, but important, matter ... The door.

Hangar Doors

Hangar doors tend to be quite simplistic:

- Vertical lift doors (can be expensive if the entire width of a hangar entrance is required)
- Shutter doors
- Crossover doors (part of the entrance can be opened, but not the width at the same time – the more leafs, the more expensive)
- Outrigger doors (if the whole entrance width is required, out-rigging allows for lesser leafs, and full access to the entrance)

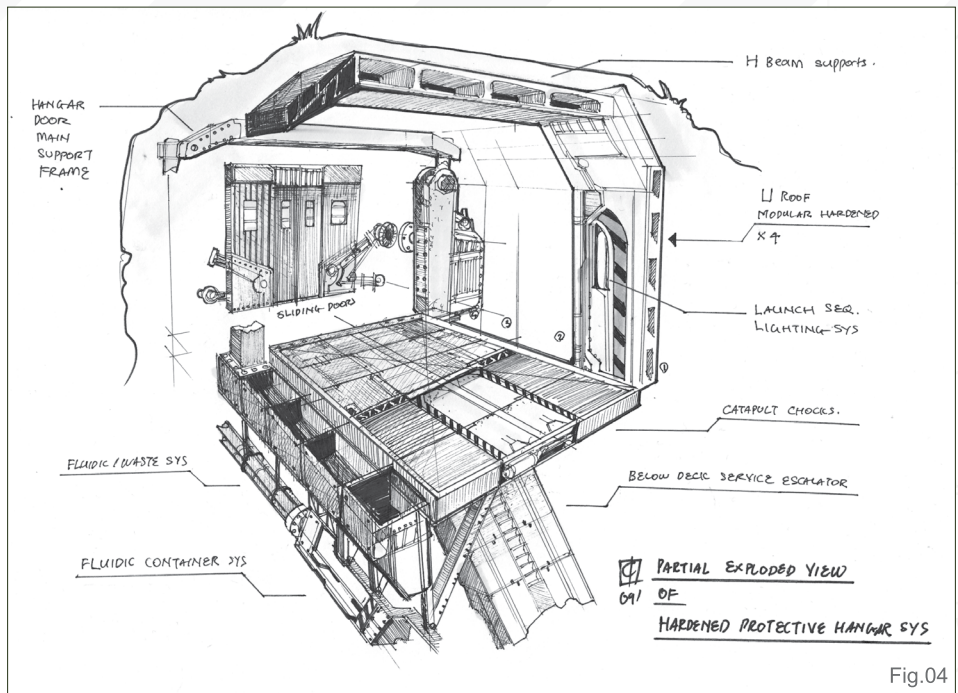
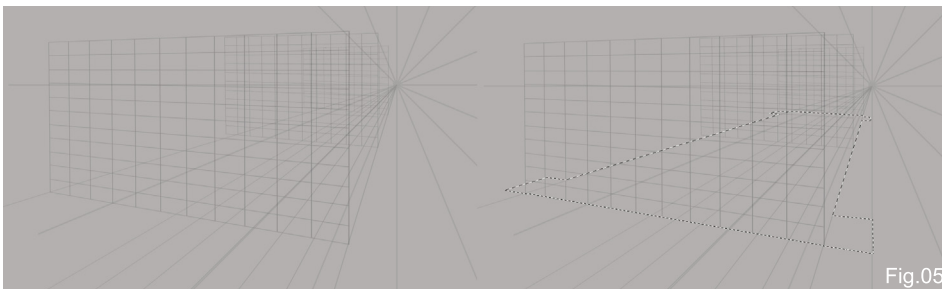


Fig.04

Non-commercial/civilian hangars can be more complex and can include the following for consideration:

- Reinforced (built to withstand an immediate direct assault)
- Blast and pressure sealed doors (heavier, thicker and built to withstand extremes of pressure/conditions)
- Concealed

II: Hangar Design Production

The Traditional Approach

The next aspect to consider is to bring our existing knowledge of hangars and apply them towards a fictitious sci-fi setting. During the production of art for games and movies, a simple three-quarter perspective view (**Fig.03**) can be quite informative. This provides some degree of three-dimensionality and various

aspects of the design can be immediately considered:

- Functionality and believability
- Scale
- Local geology
- Surface material used
- Allows for simple and direction annotation
- Media – traditional/digital methods may be employed

In essence, from this one single view, the artist should be able to determine if the set design is functional and looks like it would fit within the universe/story being told. Simple aspects of scale can be garnered by the use of a placeholder object, e.g. figures, transport and objects such as the size of bolt holes, windows, tracks and ladders.

Local geology means you can incorporate the hangar within a cliff side or hill top (see **Fig.03**) and get a feel of whether such concealment would be believable or not. Simple suggestion of surface materials, e.g. metal, wood & plastic (etc.), can be suggested to appear solid, fragile or able to withstand a direct heavy assault. Best of all, most of this can be performed with simple tools, like a pen and paper – or digitally.

In production design, it is also quite useful to be able to separate the various elements to show a cutaway design, to describe its functionality further. In **Fig.04**, the hangar design established in **Fig.03** is further described to show that it has the ability to have a lift system that could perhaps lead towards additional underground storage. Other aspects, such as life support systems, ventilation and piping can be described. Furthermore, the incorporation of various aspects such as hydraulic powered hangar doors can be explained further, and how the hangar is reinforced externally and internally.

III: Hangar Design Production

The Digital Method

These days, the generation of such sets can be rapidly built using “block models”, produced in any 3D programme. Such block models are simple geometrical representations that take into account the perspective and scale of large shapes and forms of objects relative to one another. The offside of this is the required familiarisation with any 3D programme, ranging from freeware such as Blender 3D, to Google SketchUp Pro, to industry standards such as Maya and 3d Studio Max.

For the purposes of this tutorial, however, we will be using Photoshop to produce a similar process primarily using the line tool and perspective as our main tools.

Perspective Grid

The success of this methodology requires absolute correct and accurate perspective being set up initially. In **Fig.05**, a simple one-point perspective is set to the right (with an implied hidden second point perspective mirrored on the left). A cattle grid of squares is locked out in perspective, vanishing into the horizon.

The next step involves masking out a base using the lasso selection tool (L). The following aspects are relatively straightforward. As long as the bounding aspects of the initially established perspective are adhered to, the realisation is a matter of designing within this three-quarter perspective grid using the line tool.

In **Fig.06**, we outline a simple six-point approach from start to finish:

- Using the established perspective grid, you can plan out an angular-shaped hangar. Try to think in a modular fashion, and incorporate that into building a modular ceiling support

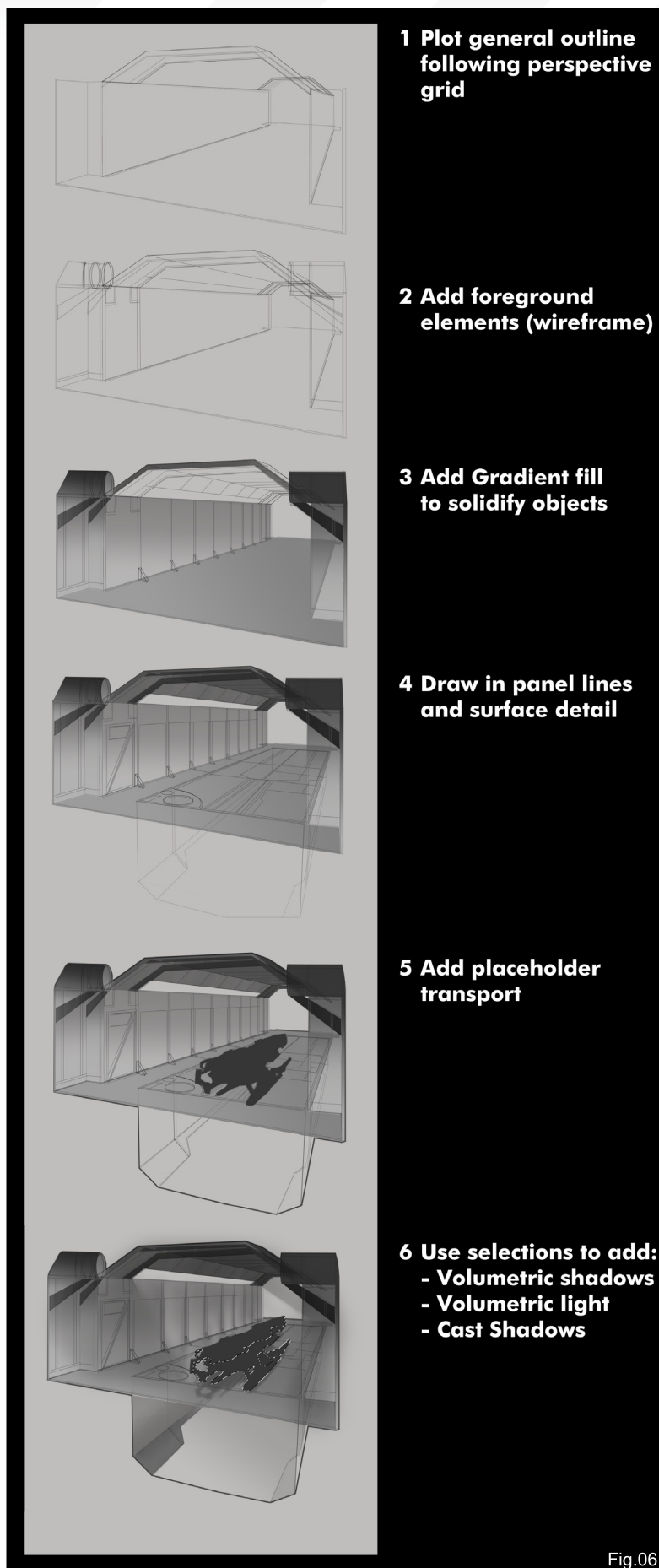


Fig.06

- The next aspects to consider are some side ceiling slats, to allow natural lighting to filter through. Additional foreground elements, such as an outrigger support for the hangar doors, are considered

- Once the main details are added, use the gradient tool to lightly give your wireframe construction some solidity and suggestion of surface material

- Adhering within the perspective, you can lathe in further panel lines and details

- To add an underground storage, a lower line drawing is added. To further reinforce the scale, the shape of a futuristic transport is also added. Try not to spend too long thinking about how this transport may look; it merely needs to function as a placeholder and be in the right proportion/perspective to suggest scale – that is all

- Finally, additional touches such as lighting, cast shadows and ambient occlusion can be added onto various layers

Your product is now relatively ready to be shown as a basic idea to the producer, at this stage. If time remains, you may choose to apply a basic colour pass, or even take it into a painting or illustration.

IV: Hangar Design Production

The Marker Method

Once the initial idea for the hangar set is designed, you may chose to work it up as a marker and pen study/design. Markers and pens afford another dimension of the rapid generation of ideas, and the tactile feel allows artists to think the design through without the abstraction and distraction of a more digital workflow. However, some artists are more comfortable using a purely traditional or purely digital workflow, and at the end of the day, whatever works most efficiently for you is the best methodology for you – and you alone.

In **Fig.07**, an adaptation of the initial sketch produced in **Fig.02** is utilised and extrapolated into a more sci-fi feel – i.e. more angularity is employed. In addition, the idea is to produce

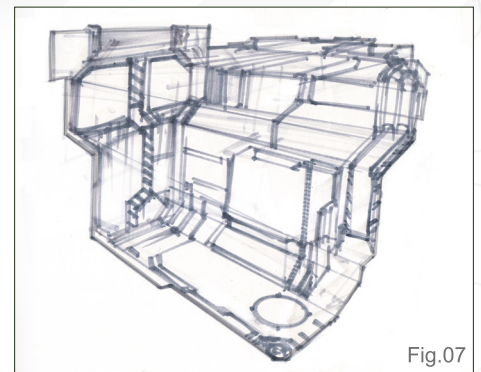


Fig.07

a rough idea to explore the suitability and functionality of the hangar design. As such, a clean finish is not required. The whole purpose is exploration of ideas, rapidly and efficiently.

Using this method, various aspects can be explored, such as:

- Hangar doors – have angular, 45-degree corners
- Extrusion – each object has a level of extrusion to lend to the depth and form
- Repeating angular shapes – to reinforce the style and feel
- Design elements – ladders, sinkholes, blast pressure sealed doors, reinforced control towers and windows are included to provide this hangar the ability to store a spacecraft, or a variety of space/water-based transport

In **Fig.08**, the overall forms have the same colour gradation to suggest large surfaces or similar materials. This allows for smaller forms, such as pipes, doors and caution markings, to pop forward. If time remains, the use of a white pen can be used to add specular and highlights. Once you've shown the producer, if the idea is approved, you can then use this initial rough marker sketch to redraw it to produce a cleaner, more professional finish.

V: The Hangar Design

Illustrated

Now that you are familiarised with the variety of methods used for production design, we can explore the industry methods of producing a mood piece for production purposes.

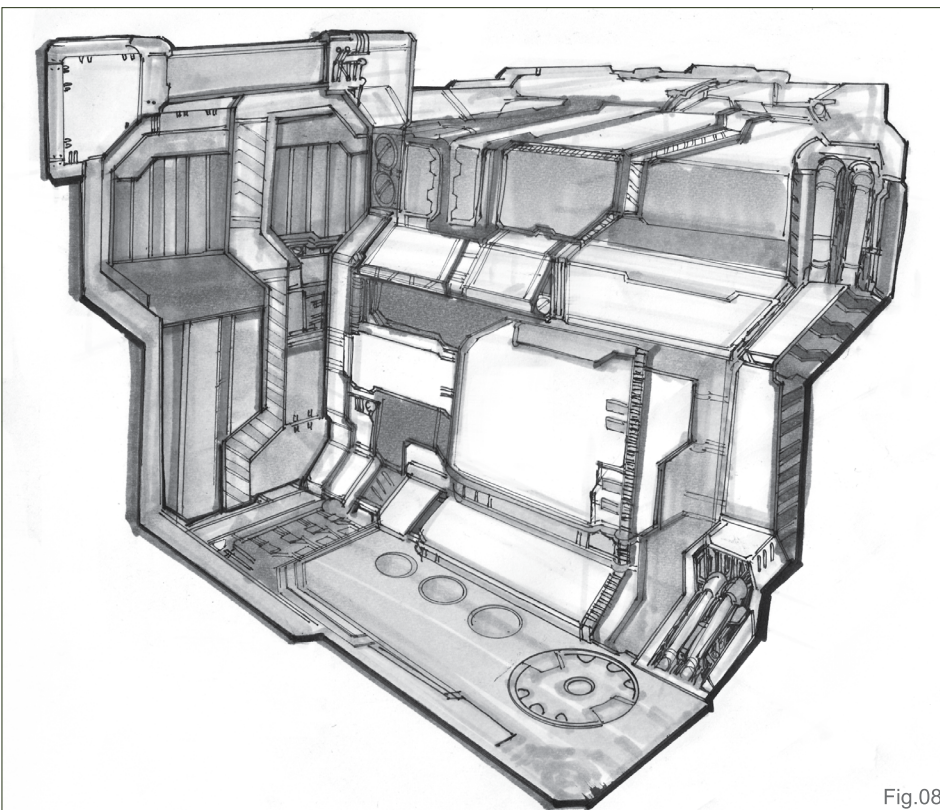


Fig.08

Organising your Digital Workflow

For the purposes of an illustrated mood piece, some basic organisation of layers can be helpful. More often than not, artists choose to save multiple PSD copies, e.g. version 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., and these can cumulatively grow in size, but provide future security if you do need to go back to an earlier piece that had a missing layer or alpha channel that your later images lack. Whereas, other artists have really amazing organisational skills and good habits, with the naming of each layer organised into layered groups.

A suggested organised layer workflow could be as follows:

1. Group – Junk (hidden)
2. Group – Perspective grid (hidden)
3. Group – Post processing II: particle effects
4. Group – Post processing I: colour changes
5. Group – Final details
6. Group – Lights
7. Group – Foreground elements
8. Group – Objects
9. Group – Background
10. Background

Note: In Photoshop, you can group a bunch of layers into a folder and give these folders a specifically assigned name. This allows for easy reviewing of various elements.

Inevitably, there comes a point where an image is primarily 60-80% complete and can be painted flattened, as you fancy.

Painting from Dark to Light

For an environmental design with a fixed design, it is often easier to start with a greyscale-to-coloured approach. Primarily, this is to ensure the design elements adhere closely to any concept you have worked up prior.

In **Fig.09**, the greyscale images start from a darkened canvas. The workflow and reasoning is thus:

- **Initial Exposure** – Imagine you are a room without any lighting. By painting in the first strokes of light, you establish your light sources and lightest parts
- **General Forms** – With the established light sources, you can further expand and work out the general shapes and structures
- **Perspective Correction** – Although most images can be

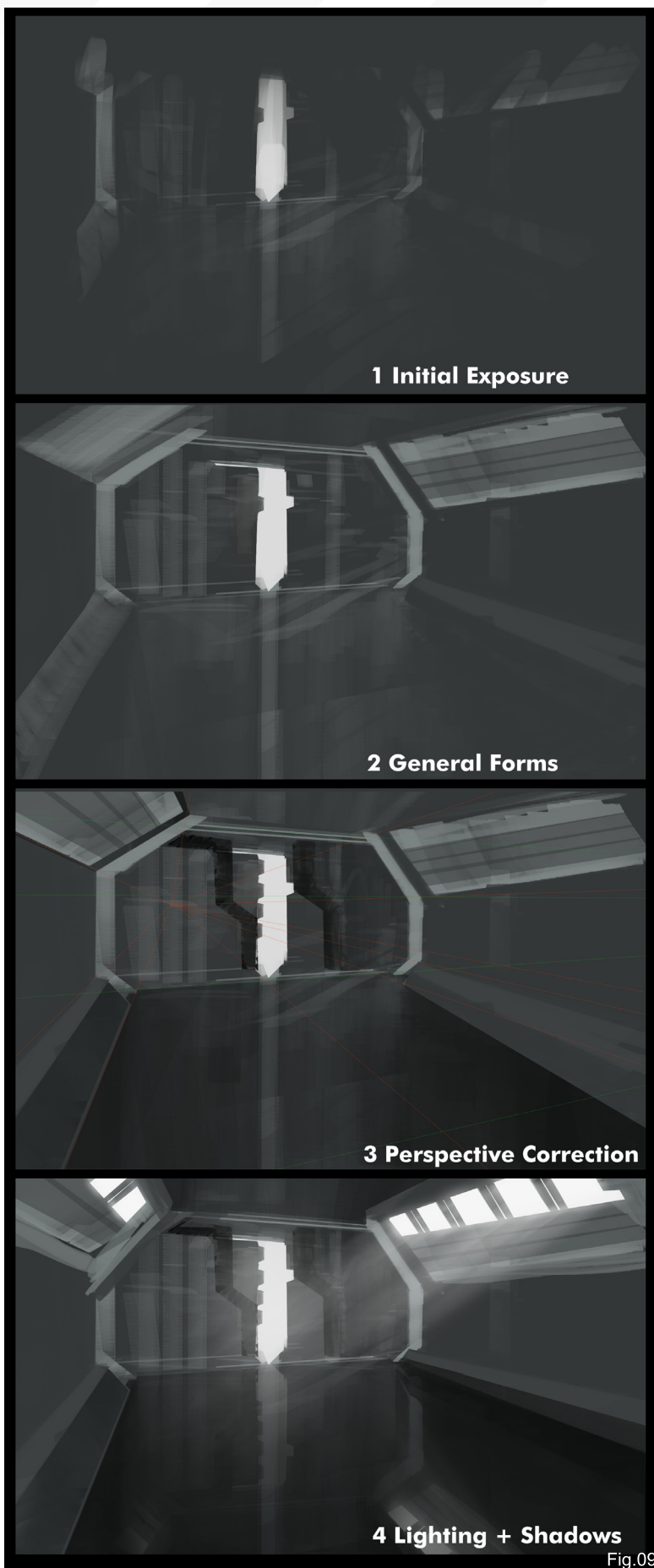


Fig.09

painted initially by eyeballing the shapes, inevitably it can be useful to plot in a perspective grid, to provide corrections to lines that you thought were parallel but actually have broken geometry/perspective

- **Lighting and Shadows** – Further elements of external lighting and general shadows can be added. In our illustration, the hangar is partially submerged with water, and thus acts as a natural mirror

Now that your initial hangar structure is built, the challenge comes in providing adequate lighting and object interest. In our hangar illustration, I had an idea of a futuristic space vessel that could be docked in water, on land or in space – and thus has natural buoyancy. I imagined a fairly large gunship or vessel that has 40-60 odd crew members.

The Dangers of Ad-Hoc Transport Designs

In **Fig.10**, this set explores different transport iterations. Unlike our previous tutorials, the object interest was built from shapes and forms, and retrofitted with a functional look and ad-hoc feel.

- **Initial Design** – I felt a semi-angular and sleek-shaped transport with a vertical external command tower would be a nice direction
- **Exploration** – Various ideas to explore a docking platform of sorts was looked into. However, the shapes were perhaps too complicated, busy and distracting overall. So the design is killed here
- **Revised design** – Perhaps a space battleship can lend towards a more epic feel? I have to thus go back into an earlier PSD and retrofit the hangar to look bigger, and redesign an ad-hoc space battleship
- **Alternative Direction** – Sometimes when exploring ideas, the silliest thing comes to mind. To paraphrase the lightsaber type duels between Dark Helmet and Lone Star of Spaceballs fame (infamy), “My Schwartz is longer than yours...”

Note: I included this WIP step (4) because it reflects the truth that concept artists tend to be creative in a variety of ways – to the extent of making fun of their own paintings. Not everyone gets it right the first time, and the main thing is to exorcise your lesser designs, until it feels right.

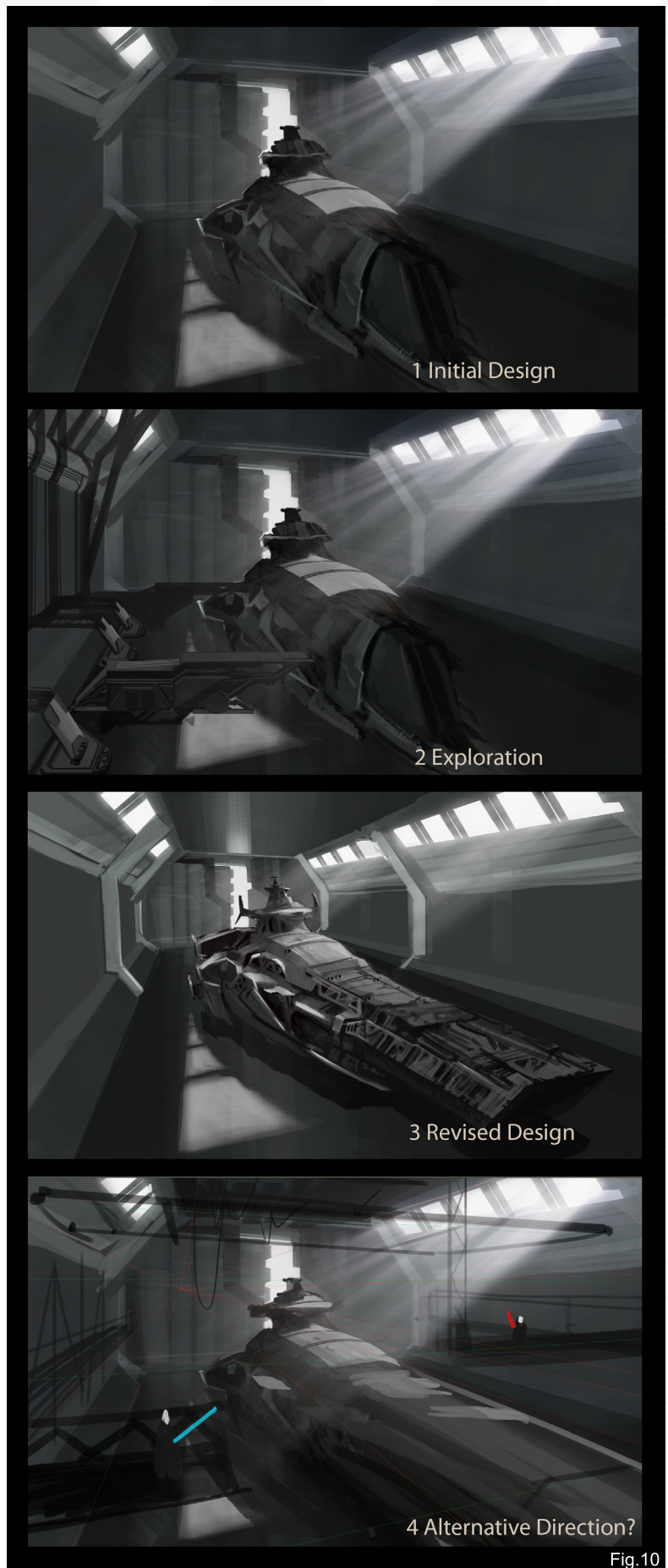


Fig.10

On the Right Track

Right, so settling on a more definitive transport design for object interest, we settle on the space battleship as the direction to pursue **Fig.11**. The overall forms are bulked up further, and some care is spent on the volumetric God rays (on a separate Lighten layer).

The next aspect is to perhaps think of building some scaffolding and walkways to populate within this scene. In **Fig.12**, a simple mixture of custom scaffolding and patterns are painted in Photoshop on a new image. Using these shapes, the remainder of the scene is populated with scaffolding, walkways and bounced light to suggest reflective metal. In addition, some human figures are also added to provide a sense of being within the scene, and scale.

Greyscale to Colour

The transition from greyscale to colour is inevitable (**Fig.13**). At some point in this process, every artist has to add colour and make the image work, and a whole variety of existing and new methods exist to make that



Fig.11

transition. The main thing to keep in mind is a definitive colour palette, and trying to make it work with the scene.

In **Fig.14**, I settle on the colour of the water – a light, iridescent green – as part of a sea dock/hangar combination. With green as the main colour, this leaves two possible main choices:

- Adjacent colours of yellow and blue
- A complimentary red

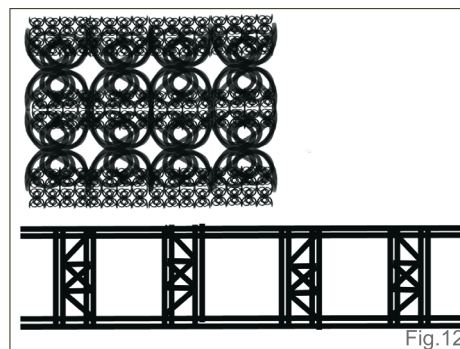


Fig.12

I opt for the former, and include a basic colour pass. The image inevitably goes through the “ugly duckling” phase where colours appear washed out, and forms not as strong as they should be. The main thing to keep in mind is that everything is remediable. And if stuck in this situation, try to work through it methodically and figure out what is required to make the image work.

You should ask yourself: Is it:

- The overall forms?
- A lack of definitive value?
- A lack of focal contrast?
- Conflicting compositional elements?
- A non-ideal colour combination?

In **Fig.15**, these problems are addressed by primarily:

- Strengthening the shapes and forms
- Using cleaner selection edges

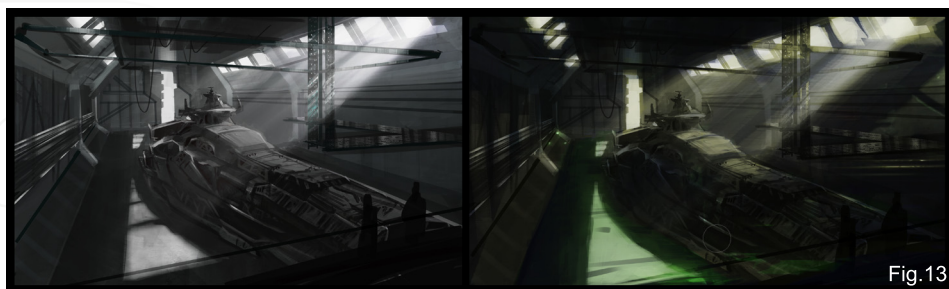


Fig.13

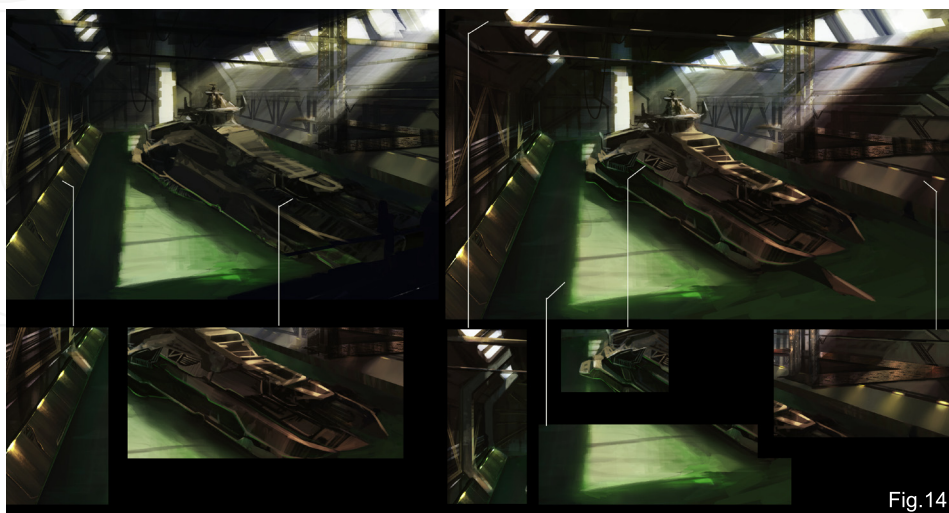


Fig.14

- Including ambient and bounced light
- Using layered objects
- Adding bounced caustics from the water, to provide an under lit surface to the object interest

The next aspect (**Fig.16**) is to add further focal detail and tone back various aspects of the image so that they do not all compete in detail:

Things that were considered:

- **Atmospheric perspective** – Objects in the distance should appear further away and contrariwise for objects in the foreground
- **Construction** – The use of blue lights and sparks from local construction workers can help give the sense of this large vessel and subject interest
- **Lighting** – Bringing back the parallel God rays helped to sit the large space battleship into the image
- **Perspective** – Rechecking that all the elements fit the initial perspective grid
- **Specularity** – The lit vertical supports were masked out using the pattern established earlier and the right desaturated coloured light was used to show it being in the mid-ground

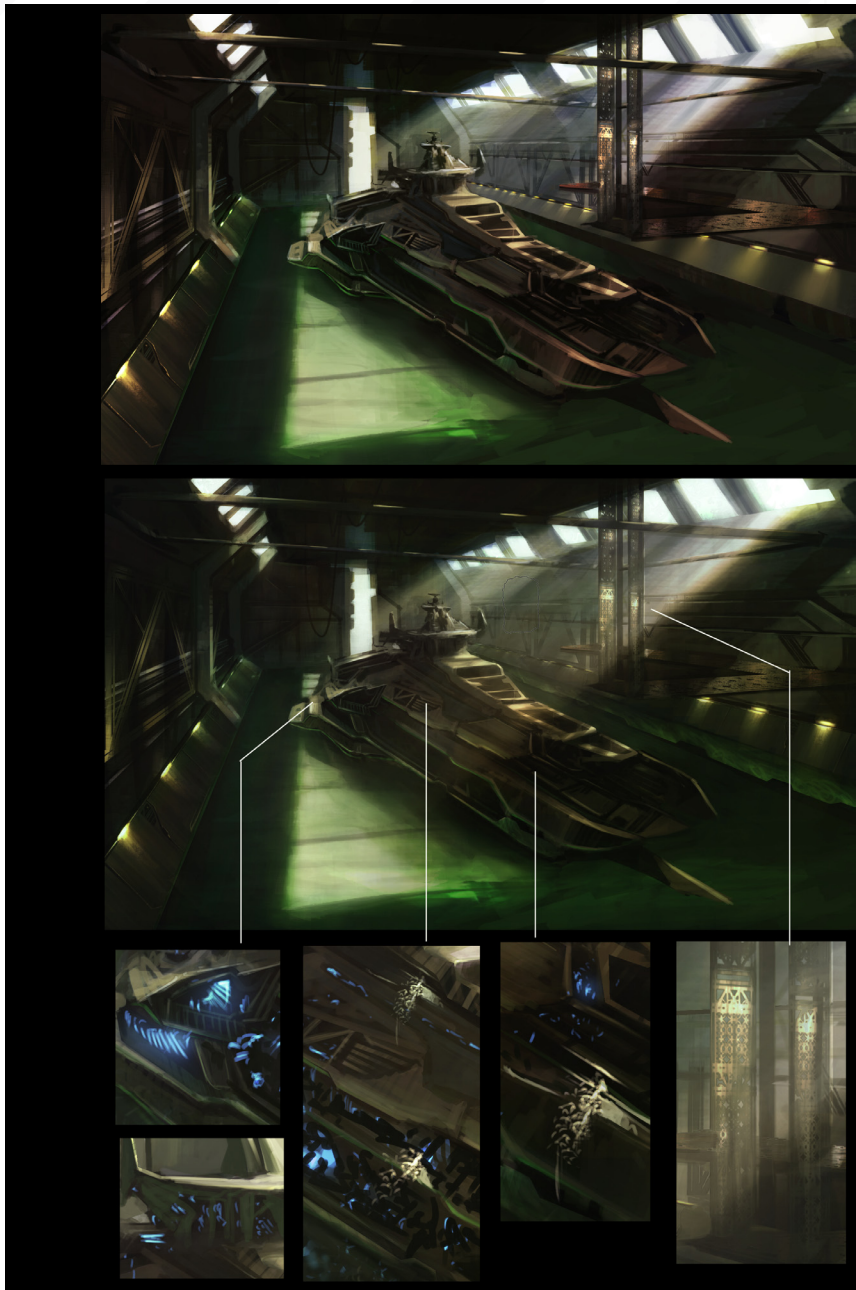


Fig.15



Fig.16

- **Light and Shadows** – Re-establishing that the cast shadows from the various structures followed the forms accordingly, to provide a more solid sense of structure

The mood piece is now almost ready for presentation. To bring it more into focal detail, the main horizontal axis of the transport is worked on and the foreground elements are removed temporarily to work on the background and main transport. Red signage and large LED type structures are installed to provide relief to the primary yellow-white of the overall structure (**Fig.17**).



Fig.17

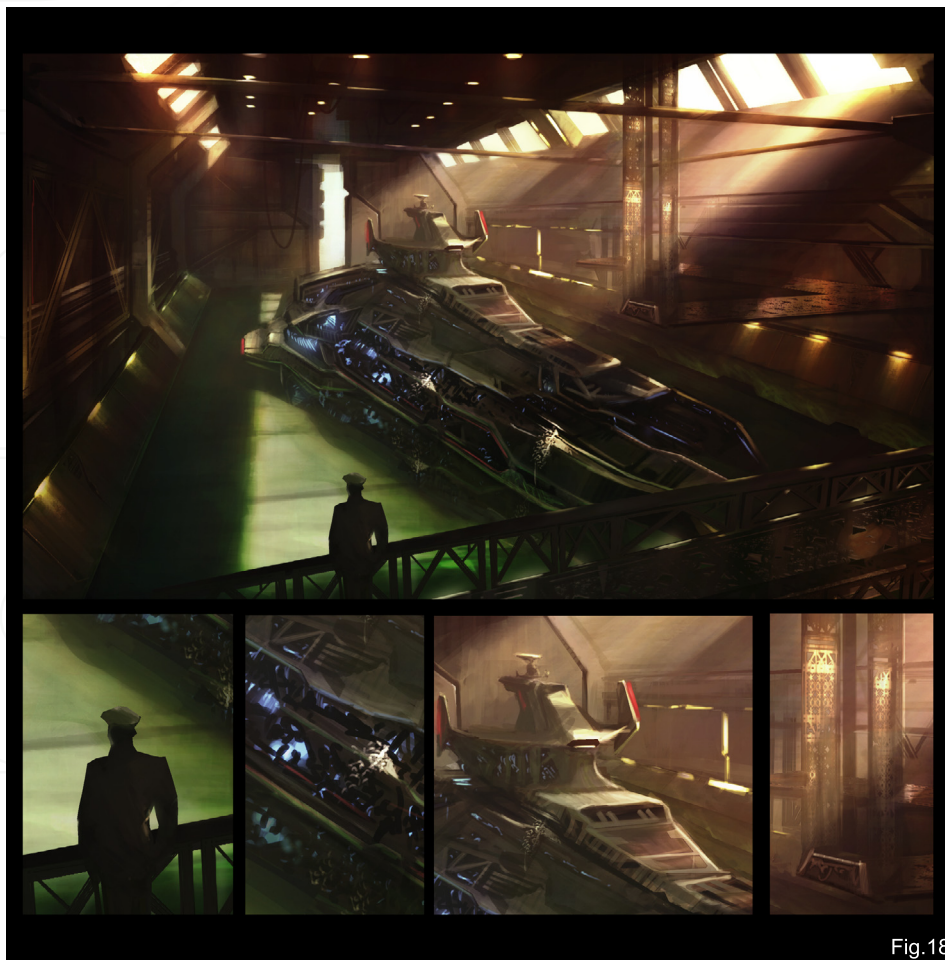


Fig.18

Finishing Touches


To complete the image (Fig.18), the re-installation of the foreground catwalk is reintroduced. Using a careful masking of the pattern texture built earlier, the foreground catwalk is rebuilt and lit accordingly to appear 3-dimensional.

In addition, I relocated the placeholder figure to the far left, and decided on a more recognisable navy uniform feel to situate the viewer into the mood piece. As a final twist, I go back in and change the overall colour palette to a red-green complimentary, instead.

Optionally, you can choose to re-colour or relight the whole image to explore different colour (warm, cold, monochromatic) and lighting (darker, greyer) situations.

Conclusion

Well, that's the first environmental related sci-fi tutorial that we have covered. In these final tutorials, the aim is to share all the studio,



production and troubleshooting approaches
used for professional work. I liken the concept
design process as a visual design and
troubleshooting exercise – nothing glamorous or
fancy, just good, progressive ideation.

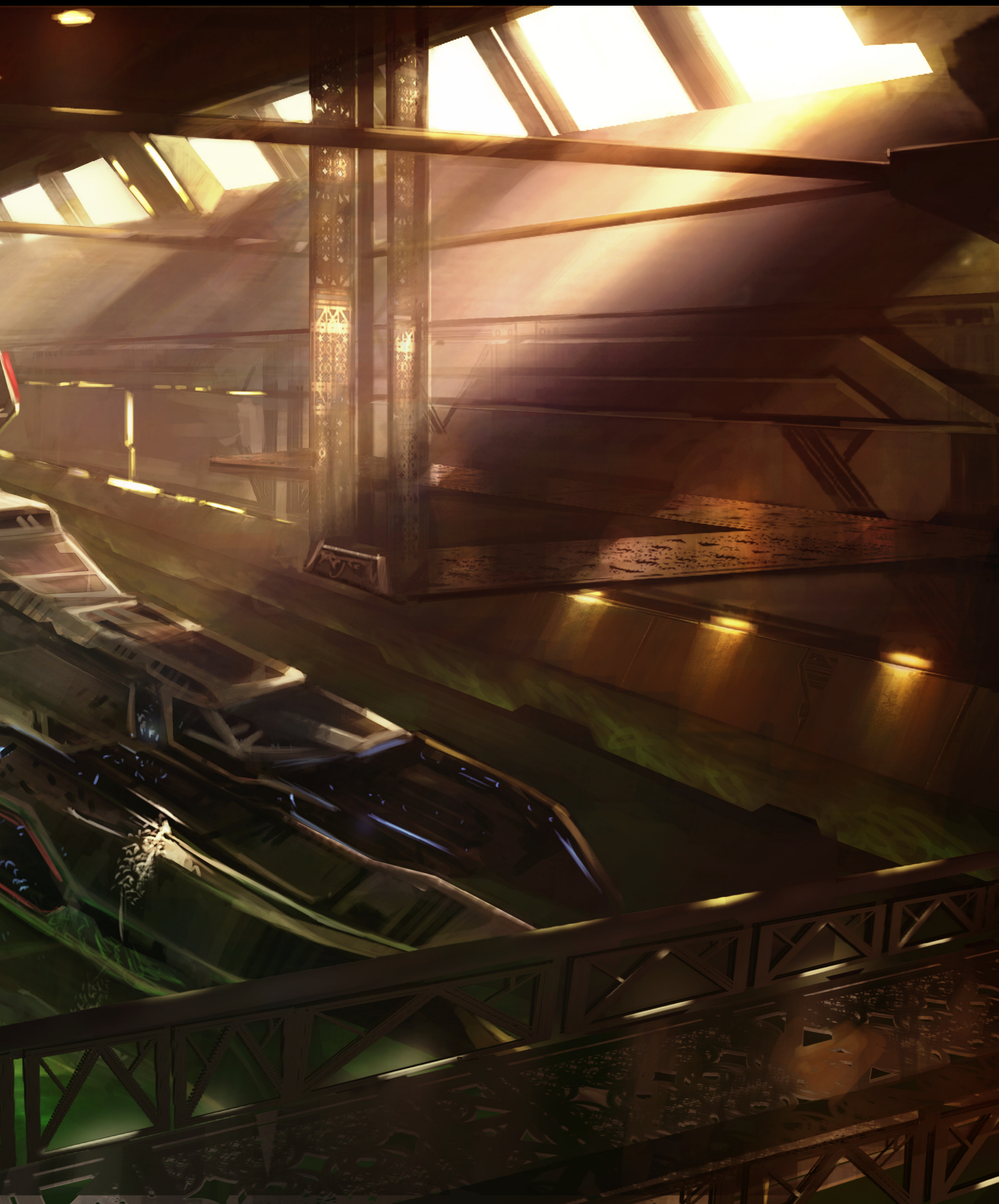
Dr Chee Ming Wong

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MR REAPER

MAKING OF BY JOSE ALVES DA SILVA

Jose Alves da Silva explains how he used Phototshop to create his image "Mr. Reaper".

"I questioned myself on what the personification of death should look like. I decided he should definitely be very old - possibly the oldest of all creatures. He should also be wise and have a certain mysterious feeling associated with him"

MR. REAPER

Created In:

Photoshop

Concept

"Mr. Reaper" was made with a single objective in mind: having fun! I looked for a subject that I could mix the universe of heroic fantasy with a humorous approach, and what could be a better subject than the personification of death itself – the Grim Reaper? Such a great character gives an artist a lot of possibilities!

I questioned myself on what the personification of death should look like. I decided he should definitely be very old - possibly the oldest of all creatures. He should also be wise and have a certain mysterious feeling associated with him. I tried to transmit these ideas by giving him an extremely long white beard and the body structure of an older man with bony fingers, narrow shoulders, a large belly, skinny legs



Fig.02



Fig.01

and a bent posture, using his loyal scythe as a support. A long smoking pipe also helped to reinforce his wise/wizard look.

For such a surreal character I needed a surreal set. So, the Land of the Dead seemed like a nice environment for the Reaper; a place where souls roam within a putrid atmosphere, filled with mysterious rock formations – and a pinch of humour here and there.

In order to reinforce the character's mystery, I chose to place the main light source of the

image behind the Reaper, who should have a very strong and recognisable silhouette against a bright, gigantic moon.

Composition

The composition was laid out following the rule of thirds (dividing the image horizontally and vertically in three thirds). I also brought one main diagonal into play, marked by the scythe, and the circle of the moon (**Fig.01**).

Knowing that the main focal points should be placed at the intersection of the thirds' lines, I



Fig.03

tried to place the character's head in the top right intersection; however, I was sacrificing too much of the character's posture and ended up placing his head in the intersection area between the thirds' line and the moon's circle.

Lighting

I laid out a quick sketch and started painting each element with a flat shade of grey (Fig.02). This allowed me to study the depth between the scene elements, and also the distribution of values in the image.

One trick to verify whether an image has got good contrast is to remove its saturation by turning the image into greyscale. So, starting the process by studying the lighting situation before colour, guarantees that the final image will have a nice contrast.

As mentioned, one of my main goals was to achieve a strong silhouette by placing the



Fig.05



Fig.04

character against a bright background, trying to make my character recognisable by looking only at its contour. Whilst studying the contour I decided to go for a humorous aesthetic, based on the concepts: elongated, curvy and pointy (Fig.03).

Colour

With the lighting and silhouette taken care of, it was time to introduce some colour. To keep the image values, I started by painting on top of the greyscale image with a layer set to Colour

blending mode. I also created a layer set to Multiply and another to Colour Dodge, which allowed me to use brighter (colour dodge) or darker (multiply) tones of the same colour by simply changing layer and keeping the same colour on the brush. This is a really quick process when making your first colour decisions (Fig.04).

During this process, I noticed that my character would be a lot stronger if he simply didn't have a face. If the Reaper symbolises death, then a

complete void in the place of his face could be the perfect metaphor for the unknown behind death.

The chosen palette is mainly dominated by cold green tones, representing the mysterious and monochromatic Land of the Dead, which contrasts with some warm orange/yellow highlights that drag your attention to the character's face.

At this stage, you'll notice that if you reduce the size of, or squint at the image, the global feeling of the image is already there. In other words, if the image sucks at this stage then there is a high probability that it will suck in the end, too! From this point forward, the detailing starts and any structural changes in the future will be very painful. So, it's better not to let any major compositional changes go beyond this point. When the miniature of your image looks right, it's time to proceed.

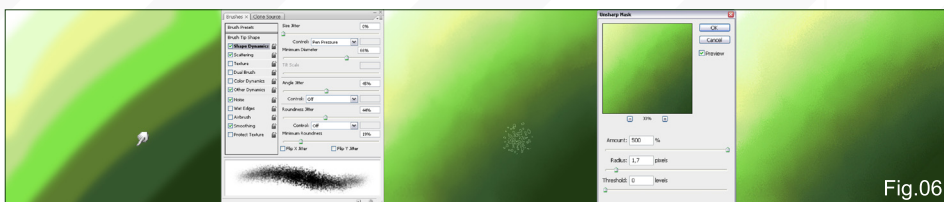


Fig.06



Fig.07



Fig.08

Texture

I was looking for a rougher, hand-painted feeling and trying to avoid a very clean and smooth finish. It was important that there was some texture in the painting, and so to try and achieve that "painterly look", I created a set of ragged edge brushes (**Fig.05**) which I used to make the whole painting.

Mr. Reaper Making Of

Blending can be a great time-saving tool, however, it also tends to blur and smudge the texture of the painting. In order to avoid that smearing effect I have created a really nice blender that leaves some texture on the painting. Not a lot of people know that if you

create a brush in Photoshop with some sort of scattering, and use it as a smudge tool, then you get a really nice blending tool that will keep the texture of the brush you are using. In **Fig.06** you can clearly see how the smudge tool blends the colours in an uneven way, achieving an



Fig.10



Fig.11

2d
artist

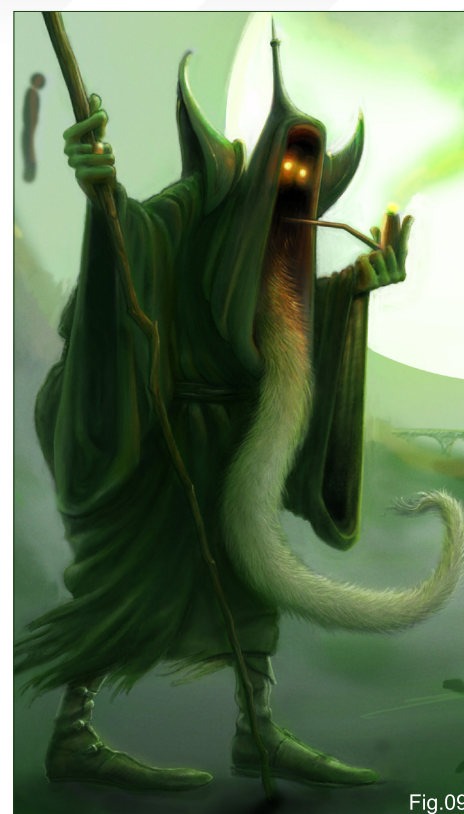


Fig.09

interesting texture. As this brush leaves a sort of subtle noise, I decided to emphasise it by using a strong Unsharp Mask filter.

Finishing

From this point on started the laborious yet fun process of detailing (**Fig.07 & Fig.08**).

I started with the main character, having spent a lot of time working on his cloak and its draping. I tried to keep the values really dark in the cloak area to maximise the silhouette effect I was trying to achieve (**Fig.09**). Then came the detailing of the environment, where I introduced some more of the elongated, curvy and pointed details on the dying trees, on the skull, on the rock formations and on the castle, to achieve a unified and coherent aesthetic (**Fig.10**).

At this time I thought that the painting was finished, so I decided to post it in 3DTotals forum. I ended up receiving some really nice feedback that alerted me to the fact that the character's feet were looking awkward and badly aligned. It's always good to have an extra pair of eyes looking at our paintings!



I corrected the feet and added a few more humorous details that I had in mind, as some eye candy for the observing viewer (**Fig.11**), like the hanging doll, the laundry rope on the castle, or the vulture resting on the skull.

To finish up, I created a layer with a coloured noise and overlaid it lightly (5%) on top of the image. I hope you like the final result (**Fig.12**).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the online community for sharing their tips and techniques; they have been truly inspiring and fundamental to my growth as an artist.

Thank you!

Jose Alves da Silva

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Who Is That?

Making of by Sean Hong

This is just one of a series of artworks by Sean Hong; he talks to us about his inspiration and the techniques used in the creation of this beautifully intriguing image. Enjoy!

“Sometimes there is only a piece of thin gauze between reality and dreams. This painting is a kind of combination of the wonderful memories and romantic notions I had when I was a little boy...”

Who is That

Created In:

Photoshop

Story: Who Is That...

"Who... is... that...?"

Suddenly I feel a strong light being cast on me while I am in a sweet dream.

Wait a second...

I remember that it was very late after school,
And I climbed the hill behind the town,
Soon, I found a mysterious flower I had never seen before.

I drew it excitedly in my book,
And then I felt a little sleepy...

Now I rub my eyelids and open my eyes slowly,

Then I witness such a fantastic scene that I will never forget it ...

The work, *Who Is That...* is just one piece from my series called, *The Children Forgetting To Go Back Home*. In this painting, a child has left the noisy metropolis, climbed a hill behind the city and has started to draw a flower that he found after school. He enjoyed sharing time with nature, and soon he fell asleep. Now the young boy has just been awakened by the Forest Rescuer, who has been sent by the little boy's dear mum to find him.

Inspiration: Dreams and Reality

The relationship between fantasy and reality is one of my favourite themes to express in both animations and paintings. Awaking from a dream might lead you into another.

This work is all about a dream. Sometimes there is only a thin piece of gauze between reality and



Fig.01

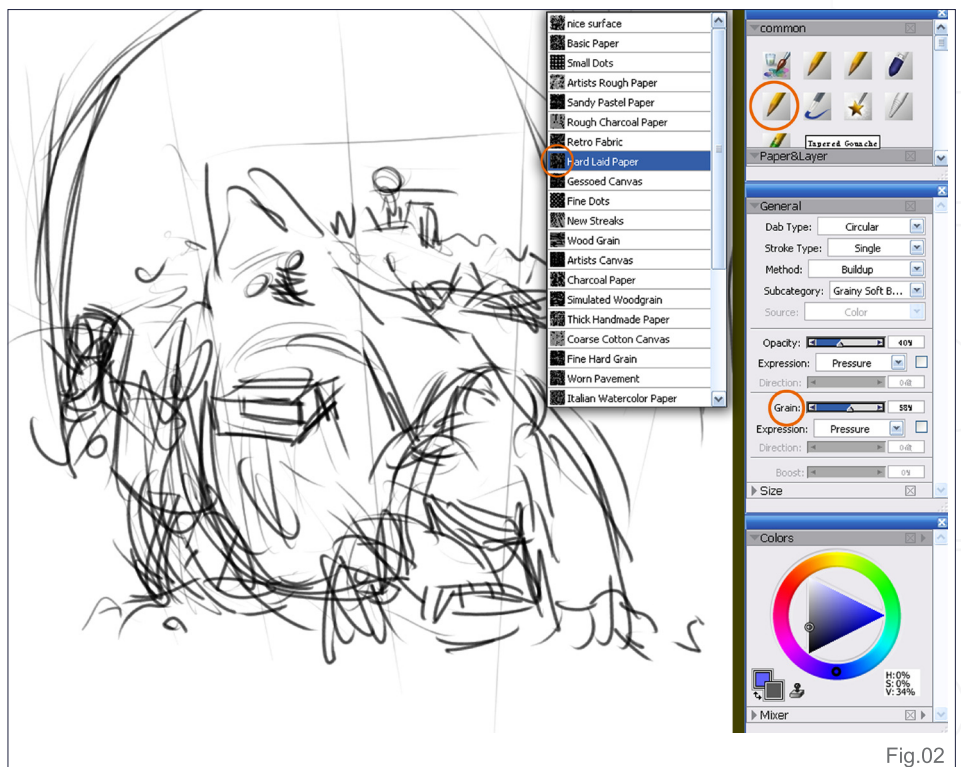


Fig.02

dreams. This painting is a kind of combination of the wonderful memories and romantic notions I had when I was a little boy.

Perhaps because I majored in animation, I've always wanted my work to be able to tell a vividly touching story, no matter how big or

small. I believe storytelling can plant a living spirit into an artwork.

Design of the Forest Rescuer

The concept of the Forest Rescuer creature was started several years ago; I designed it when

passing through a street lined with numerous metasequoia trees down both sides. These friendly creatures are born in trees and decorate themselves with old man-made things. They live in forests away from the cities; however, they can be hired by parents to find children who have been lost in the forest. Various versions of the rescuers have featured in my sketchbook until now (Fig.01).

Brief 'Making Of' Steps

I planned to make the characters more cartoon-like, while keeping the painting style and textures realistic, so that the child's dream appears both fantastic as well as believable, and able to confuse even the child himself.

I sketched the draft in Corel Painter X with a 2B pencil brush and a Hard Laid Paper pattern on a new white canvas (Ctrl + N), simply because I feel comfortable with the grain this gives in Corel Painter X – it allows me to feel free in the sketch stage (Fig.02).

After the basic framework was laid down, I took the sketch into Adobe Photoshop CS (I still use the old version because it is faster on my PC

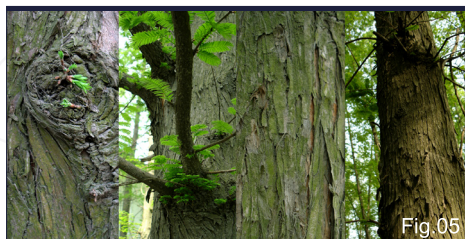


Fig.05

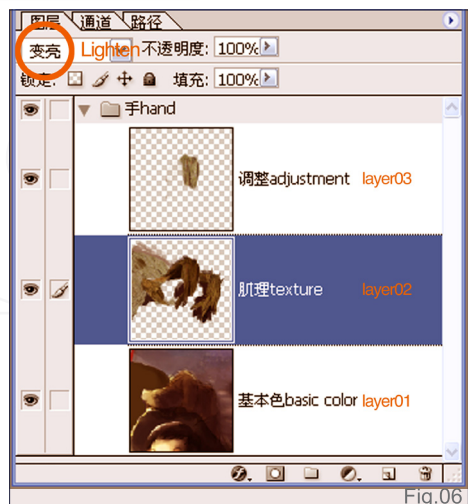


Fig.06

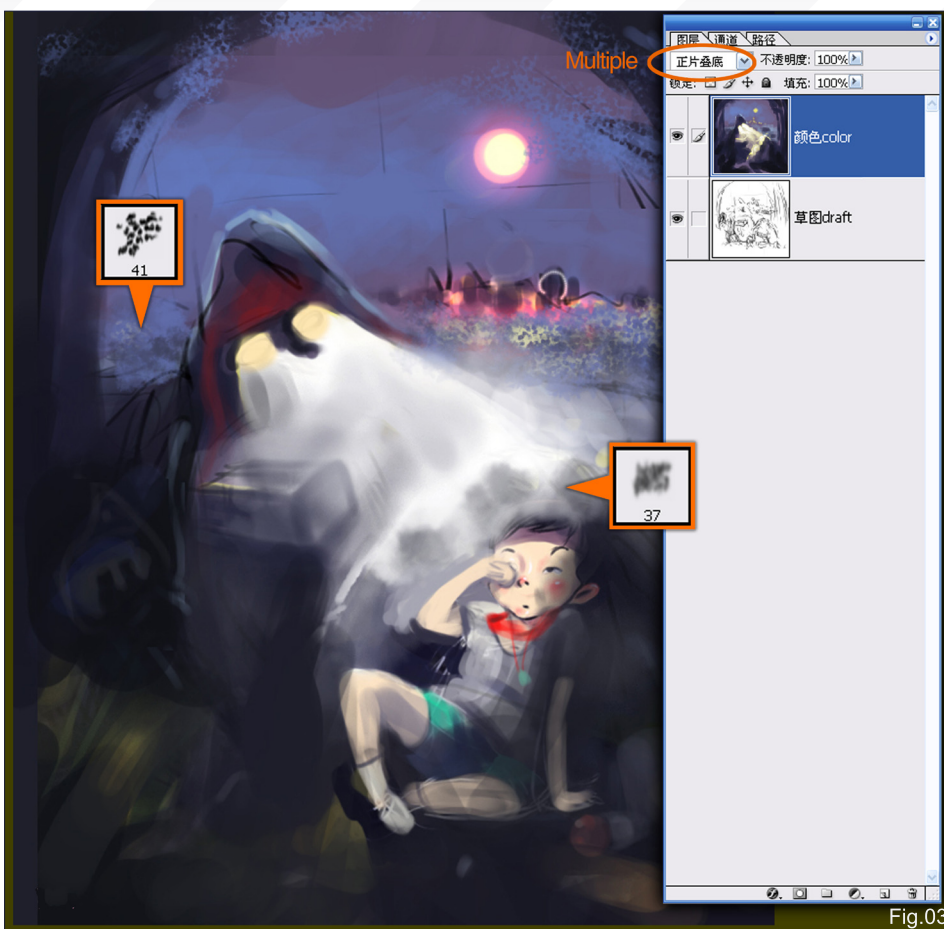


Fig.03

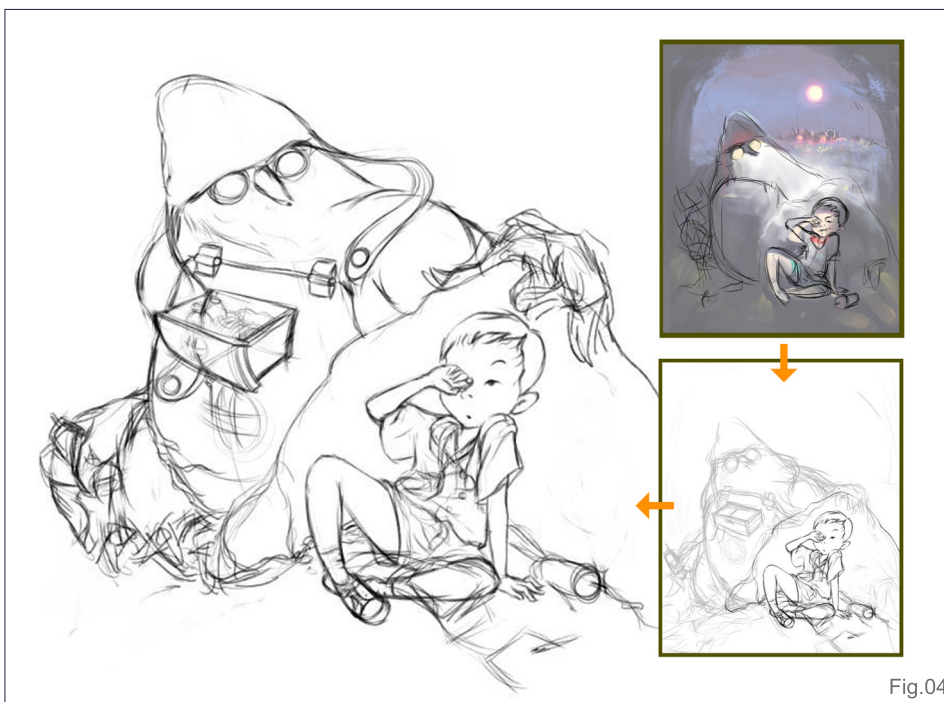


Fig.04

than the newer ones, and it had enough tools for this project). Almost all of the painting and compositing work was done in Photoshop. I added a multiple layer on top and began to give the draft a quick, rough colour image with two

main custom brushes. I then checked to see if the colour palette worked well (Fig.03).

I merged all the layers (select all layers and press Ctrl+E), saved the file (Ctrl+S), and in the



next step I returned to Corel Painter X to refine the pencil lines according to the new coloured draft, because I had some new ideas and a clearer vision during the colouring phase. I picked the same 2B pencil brush again and shaped every detail of the two main characters carefully (**Fig.04**). After that came the important part: painting in colour in Photoshop.

Key Painting Steps

I'd like to explain more about the painting details that went into creating the Forest Rescuer (because I used a very standard method to draw the other elements, using a standard soft airbrush from shadows right through to highlights). Since this time I decided to create the image digitally, rather than traditionally paint using acrylics, I felt that I should make profitable use of my digital skills. So I used photographs of metasequoia trees that

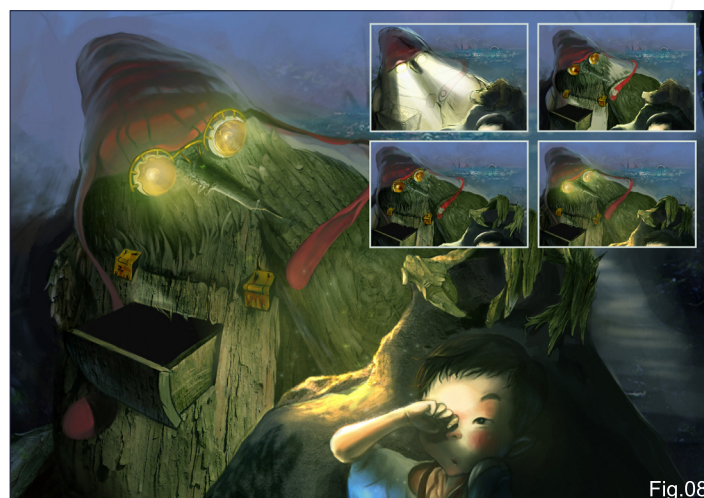


Fig.08



Fig.09a

Fig.09b

I shot as reference, and started to work on the texture of the Forest Rescuer in Photoshop (**Fig.05**).

In order to give a clear example, I'll now focus on the hand of the rescuer. Firstly, I created 'layer01' at the bottom (**Fig.06**). Then I painted a rough shadow and added light to it with a normal soft airbrush, making sure to mix them well (here I picked the colours directly from the tree photographs to make sure the work appeared more realistic) (**Fig.07a**). Then I dragged a suitable photograph into the file as 'layer02' and changed the layer composite method to Lighten. This gave me an image with a charming perspective and a textured look (**Fig.07b**).

I kept working to get the whole hand like you can see in **Fig.07c**. But that was not good enough to me, for it seemed as though not to follow the environment. So I added another layer, 'layer03' (**Fig.06**), above the former ones and used it to do some small but essential adjustments, like identifying small reflections

and defining highlights and shadows according to the direction of light (**Fig.07d**). (I always try to merge layers often; I learned this lesson with this image because with my increasingly large layers, my lovely PC almost crashed during the mission!)

The following parts of the creation were finished in the same way (**Fig.08**), and they really cost a great deal of time! In the process, I kept avoiding paying too much attention to tiny details, but tried to focus on working on the entire balance of the whole picture. I find this to be important.

Defining Elements

In the draft stage, the white light from the rescuer's eyes were more like stage spotlights (**Fig.09a**). However, with the painting going on, I found that the two strong cone shapes were going to damage the balance of the composition and weaken the mysterious atmosphere of the painting. So I decided to delete the shape of light and pay more attention to the environmental effects made by the light (**Fig.09b**). The whole canvas then turned out to be more harmonious. The bits that the light was cast on were painted with a Colour Dodge soft brush with different levels of opacity. This is an

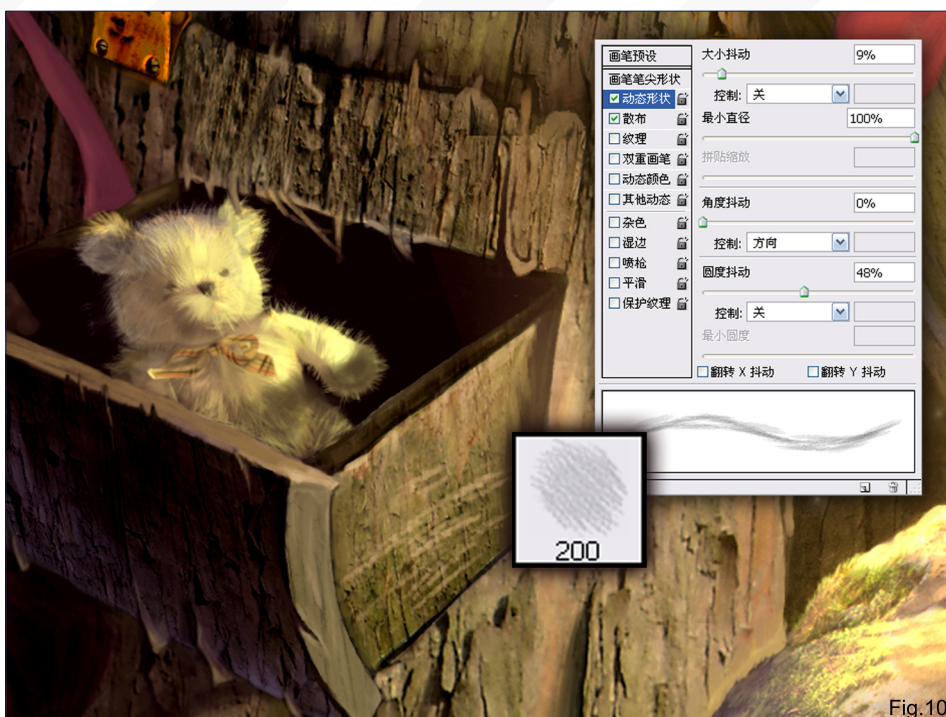


Fig.10



Fig.11a



Fig.11b



Fig.11c

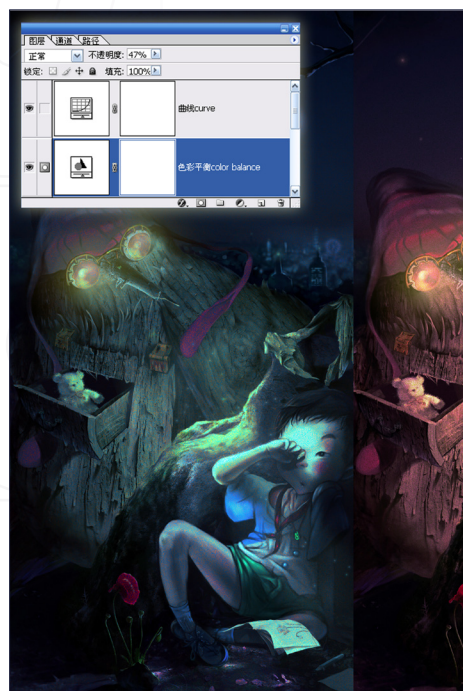


Fig.12

efficient way to render a bright-looking object in the dark (I learned this useful skill from Ryan Church). For the toy bear in the rescuer's drawer, I used a custom brush to finish the fur (**Fig.10**).

Finalising Who Is That...

The closer you get to the finished piece, the more careful you should become. All the main elements in the painting are being wrapped up, but even the smallest flaw may give the work a totally different look. By observing the work (**Fig.11a**), I found that the background was too noisy and knew that this wouldn't help the theme. So I painted a layer of dark blue to calm the sky, and the effect was satisfying (**Fig.11b**). I then defined the moon again and the lights of the city with a soft brush in Colour Dodge mode to add gems to the dark sky (**Fig.11c**). I also made a narrow path stretch to the hill on the right, in order to make a connection

between the main characters and the background. Furthermore, I used a normal soft brush with 40% opacity to darken some outlines of the boy and his rescuer, to make a contrast with the charming light from the creature's eyes.

In the end, after cleaning up, I added several adjustment layers above all the other layers to look for a comfortable colour tone and contrast (**Fig.12**). I prefer the Colour Balance tool because it changes the different colours in a quite fine way. (I also suggest changing the opacity and layer method of the adjustment layers to look for special effects.) After getting a satisfying colour and feeling, I was finally happy to let the work go.

I hope you've enjoyed this making of *Who Is That...* and have found it to be somewhat useful. Thank you for reading! My spirit is always with the children that forget to go back home...

Sean Hong

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<http://seanhong-ourstory.blogspot.com/>

Or contact:

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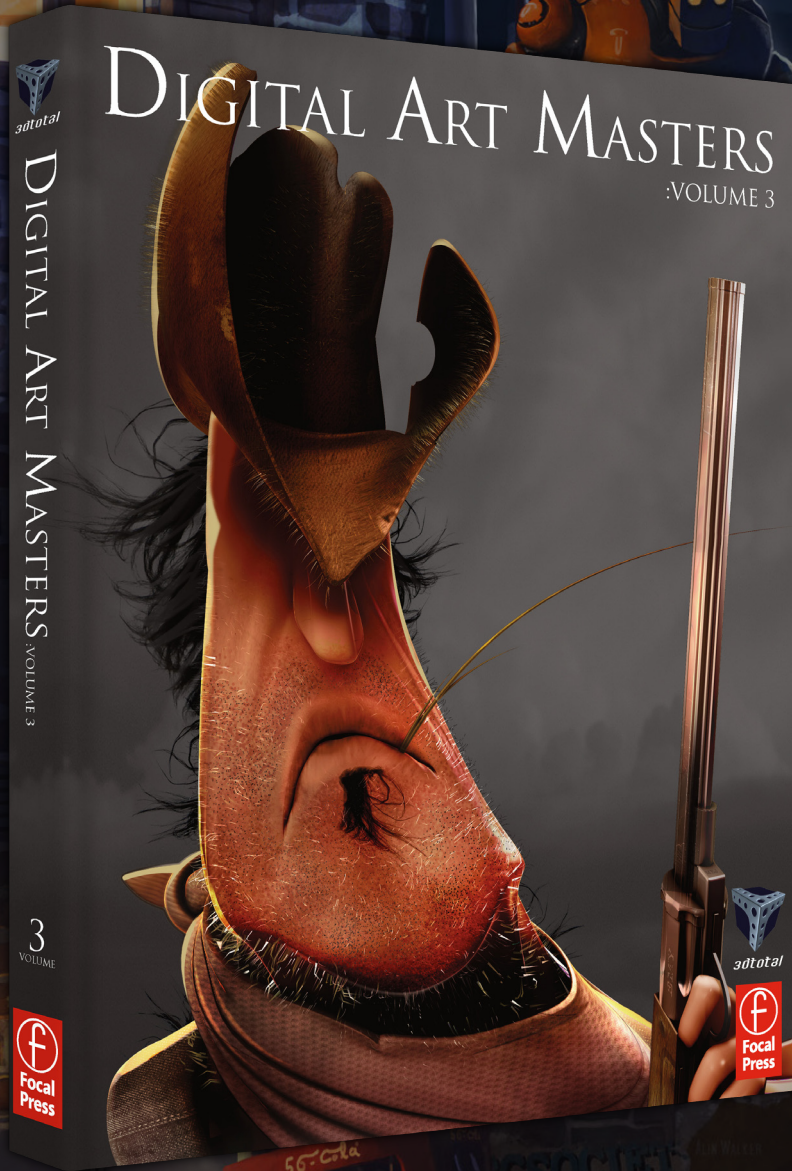
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With the release of 3DTotals's book, *Digital Art Masters: Volume 3*, we have some exclusive chapters for you...

This book is more than just an artwork book. Not only does it feature full-colour, full-page images, but each artist has given a detailed description, in their own words, of the creation process behind each piece of published artwork. And they've done it especially for this book!

This month we feature:

"CU-02 In Love"
by Goro Fujita





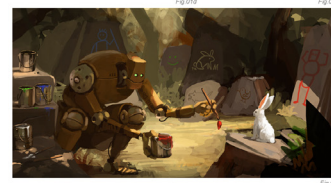
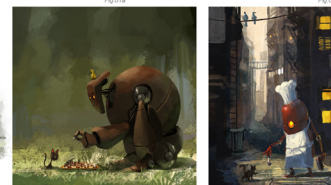
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CU-02 IN LOVE

BY GORO FUJITA

INTRODUCTION
"CU-02 in Love" was created for the "Strange Behavior Challenge" on CCB Society.org. I felt comfortable with the Challenge topic because I often paint strange scenes when I'm doing sketches of my own. I decided to create a scene with a robot, since I have a passion for them. This illustration took me about two months of my free time to complete.

IDEA
I started out sketching ideas (Fig.01a-f), looking for a nice story. I had some ideas that could have worked pretty well as a "Strange Behavior" illustration, but I also wanted to create a profound background story for the painting. Of all the ideas I had in mind, I decided to work on the concept with a cooking robot falling in love with



a cat. The basic idea was that a cooking robot gets attracted by a beautiful cat and he starts giving her fish to get her attention. The robot tries to mimic her appearance by using old Cola cans as ears and a rope as a tail (Fig.02).

PROCESS
After doing the first sketches and paintings, I soon realized that I had to make clear that the robot was attracted by the cat and not bailing it. So I started doing more thumbnail

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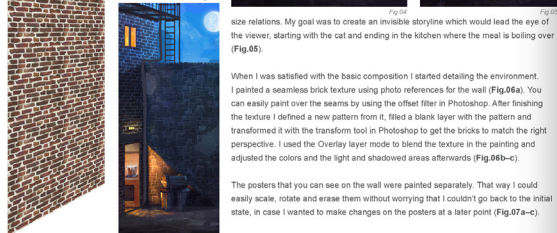
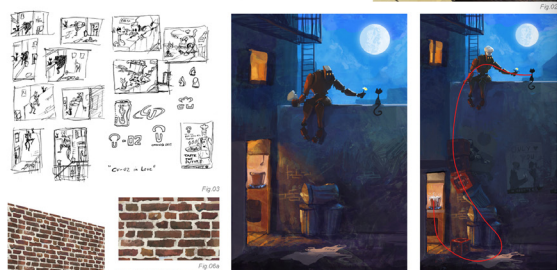
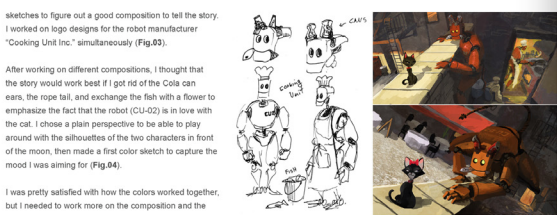
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The following shots of the "CU-02 In Love" book pages are featured here in full-resolution and can be read by zooming in...

sketches to figure out a good composition to tell the story. I worked on logo designs for the robot manufacturer "Cooking Unit Inc." simultaneously (Fig.03).

After working on different compositions, I thought that the story would work best if I got rid of the Cola can ears, the rope tail, and exchange the fish with a flower to emphasize the fact that the robot (CU-02) is in love with the cat. I chose a plain perspective to be able to play around with the silhouettes of the two characters in front of the moon, then made a first color sketch to capture the mood I was aiming for (Fig.04).

I was pretty satisfied with how the colors worked together, but I needed to work more on the composition and the



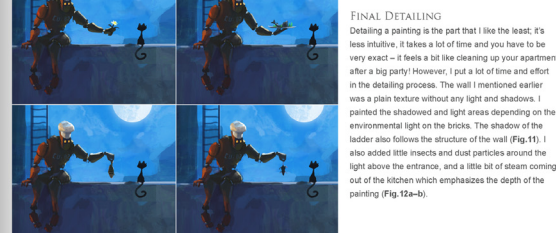
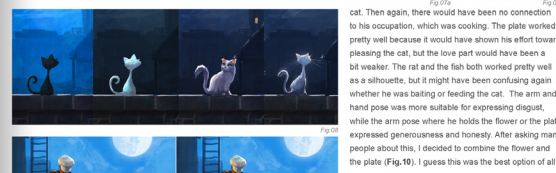
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THE CAT

The cat had to be beautiful, arrogant and elegant at the same time (Fig.06). It took some time to find the right attitude for the cat. At first I had a simple black cat facing away from CU-02. I liked the simplicity, but her attitude wasn't strong enough yet. As I darkened the sky to pull the focus more on the characters, I needed to improve the contrast and decided to change the cat into a white cat. While fur made her appear more feminine and elegant. Still not satisfied with her attitude though, I tried out different poses. I painted a version where she was looking coquettishly at CU-02, but it didn't fit well with the story. She needed to be an arrogant character who is too proud to show any emotions. So, I went back to the idea where she was facing away from CU-02. In the end, I decided to give her a realistic touch and made her fur glow in the moonlight, which emphasizes her elegance.

FISH, FLOWER, RAT, DINNER PLATE...
It was tough to decide which gift would work best for the story (Fig.09). The flower was very charming and it would have been obvious that CU-02 was in love with the



cat. Then again, there would have been no connection to his occupation, which was cooking. The plate worked pretty well because it would have shown his effort toward pleasing the cat, but the love part would have been a bit weaker. The rat and the fish both worked pretty well as a silhouette, but it might have been confusing again whether he was baiting or feeding the cat. The arm and hand pose was more suitable for expressing disgust, while the arm pose where he holds the flower or the plate expressed generosity and honesty. After asking many people about this, I decided to combine the flower and the plate (Fig.10). I guess this was the best option of all!

FINAL DETAILING
Detailing a painting is the part that I like the least; it's less intuitive, it takes a lot of time and you have to be very exact – it feels a bit like cleaning up your apartment after a big party! However, I put a lot of time and effort in the detailing process. The wall I mentioned earlier was a plain texture without any light and shadows. I painted the shadowed and light areas depending on the environmental light on the bricks. The shadow of the ladder also follows the structure of the wall (Fig.11). I also added little insects and dust particles around the light above the entrance, and a little bit of steam coming out of the kitchen which emphasizes the depth of the painting (Fig.12a-b).

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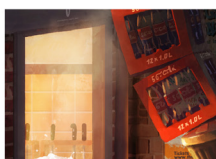


CONCLUSION

I also wrote a background story for this image, which was a first for me as I had never done this before for a single painting, but it was great to see the illustration growing along with it!

I set the story in the year 2056 in which kitchens and restaurants are equipped with "cooking units" (CUs). The CU in this story, however, has malfunctioned, and meets a white cat in the backyard of the restaurant who he tries to woo, night after night, with delicious cooked treats. The cat proves herself to be too proud to get excited over his affection, even though she too has feelings for the robot, and continues to sit high up on her wall casually waiting for her dinner each night, making CU-02 climb up the wall to feed her... If I hadn't put my focus on the story in this way, the painting would work only half as good as it does now. It also helped me in the decision-making, as every element in the painting is there for a reason. The most exciting part was to figure out a way of telling the whole story in just one image!

I didn't win anything in the challenge in the end, but the experience I gained throughout the whole painting process was more valuable to me than anything else!

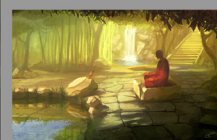
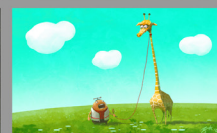
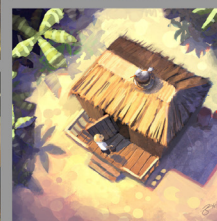
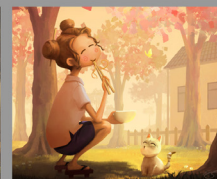
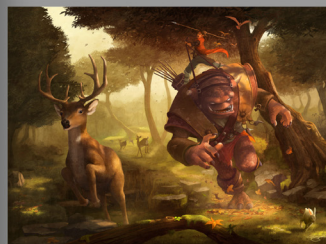


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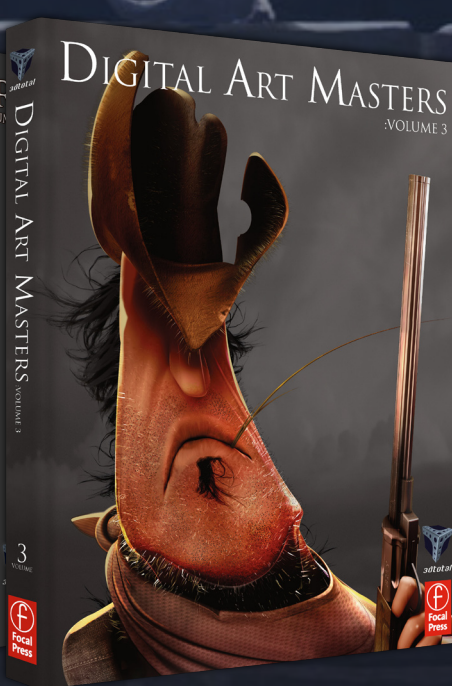
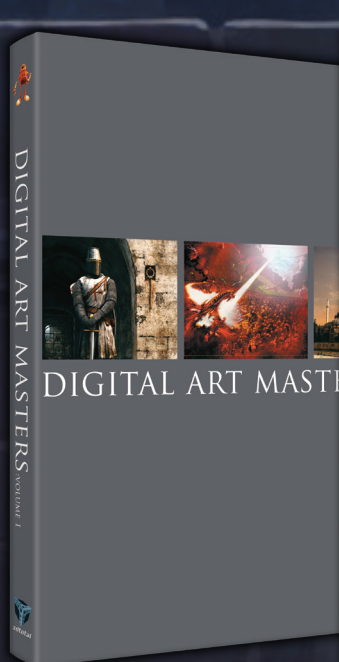
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